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THE OLD FAITH IN THE NEW DAY

# The Postwar Strategy of Religion

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JOSEPH M. M. GRAY



ABINGDON - COKESBURY PRESS

New York • Nashville

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## I. RECONNAISSANCE AT FAULT

THE WORD "STRATEGY" IN THE TITLE OF A VOLUME COMMITTS the author to a military reference with a very specific content. It identifies the science of projecting military operations for the achievement of ultimate and, it may be, remote ends. This is in contrast to "tactics," which is the disposition and handling of troops in the presence of the enemy, or on the battlefield, for the winning of an immediate and local conflict. "The theater of war is the province of strategy; the field of battle is the province of tactics."

Military students are agreed that, on General Lee's assumption that the forces at his command were adequate, the strategy involved in the Confederate invasion of Pennsylvania which ended at Gettysburg was sound. It was designed to strengthen the peace party in the North; to procure clothing, provisions, and other war materials for the Confederate army; and to win British and French recognition of the Confederacy. And a Southern victory on the battlefield would probably have accomplished those ends.

But military students are also agreed that the concentration of the Confederate forces at Gettysburg, their direction in battle by their immediate officers, the lack of co-ordination and accurate timing among the several commands—the tactics, that is to say—were fatally at fault. Preceding the entrance of the Southern army into Pennsylvania, and as part of the operation, its major cavalry force under General Stuart left the main body of troops on June 25, on what was intended to be a co-operative movement but which became an independent raid, and did not rejoin the army until a

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week later, on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg. It had done minor damage to Northern property, had captured considerable war material and some four hundred prisoners; but for a critical week the commander of the invading army, surrounded by enemy country, was without knowledge of the enemy's forces and their movements, to furnish which was General Stuart's first and essential duty. This independent adventure of the cavalry under his command is perhaps the perfect illustration of tactical action requiring courage, involving danger, demanding both intelligence and prudence, resulting in material acquisition, but wholly unrelated to the strategy of success.

The chapters which follow explore the thesis that religion, as operative in the Protestant churches of America, will be genuinely effective in the social reorganization of the world after the war only as its spokesmen recover clear apprehension of the ultimate and imperative objective which religion must pursue, only as they avoid engaging simply in immediate and limited social action, subordinate to the main purpose of religion, however attractive and desirable in itself such action may be. Without the achievement of the ultimate purpose of religion the social gains so much in the contemporary mind and hope cannot be more than precarious. If strategy is mistaken, tactics cannot succeed.

Reconnaissance means an examination of a territory, or of an enemy's position, for the purpose of obtaining information; and it is fundamental to the effectiveness of religion's ministry to the world today that it shall proceed from accurate knowledge of contemporary social and political conditions, recognition of the impact of science on contemporary thought, and a wise reaction on the part of religious leaders to the major current events. If the spokesmen of religion are uninformed concerning many of the facts, or pass mistaken judgments on them, its ministry will be defeated and its utterances suspect. That too many of those



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claiming to speak for it have been insufficiently informed and that some of their most publicized utterances, while obviously sincere, have been no less mistaken, is one of the unfortunate features of the time. The situation is being redeemed by the intelligence, thoroughness, and restraint with which the more responsible religious leaders and religious organizations are exploring the conditions indispensable to the ordering and maintenance of a satisfactory postwar world. But their work has been made more difficult because of the errors and illusions which less cautious voices have disseminated as established fact. This chapter is a report of diagnosis and disagreement, irritative rather than irenic; but if it provokes to more thorough consideration of the attitudes it criticizes, its purpose will be amply fulfilled.

Nothing in our time of total war has been more prophetic than the intelligence and effort devoted to promoting the ideals and exploring the technic of total peace. More individuals and groups than ever before have been thinking, and thinking more soundly, of the nature of the treaty which will end the conflict and of the principles which must be implemented to create and maintain the international order in peace. Such discussions as those at Malvern College, Worcestershire, in January, 1941, and at Delaware, Ohio, in March, 1942, and again in 1943, have values altogether out of proportion to the space which they occupied in the news of the day, or to any definite conclusions which they may have seemed to reach. They had the defects inherent in such gatherings, in which, by reason of their character and composition, every subject and its implications are open to impromptu remarks by everyone present. One comes away feeling that never did so many say so little about so much. But the thought that went into the preparation of the subjects presented and the widening study of the published material and findings of such conferences must have a very wholesome part in the creation of a climate of moral obligation in which the treaty makers should find it increasingly

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difficult to conduct the shrewd, often unscrupulous, negotiations which have too much characterized the treaty making of the past.

Such conferences have disseminated knowledge of important facts even when their interpretation of the facts is doubtful. Their errors, seen in retrospect and on the background of later information and developments, make for more discerning judgments in the future. One can hardly imagine a more profitable enterprise, alike for statesmen and the legendary man on the street, than a serious study of *The Christian Bases of World Order*, outlined by the Delaware Conference of 1943. The results of the conferences and discussions by groups throughout the country under the auspices of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ cannot but be of great and practical value.

Not all the actual discussions in such conferences are illustrations of logic; but even so they are not to be disregarded, for they may reveal widespread misunderstanding or moral bias inimical to sound social and religious progress. The Delaware Conference of 1942 rejected a proposed affirmation, with which it had wrestled to considerable weariness, that "the Church, as such, is not at war." But although the conference rejected it, the idea and even the language have been repeated in various public utterances and editorials pointing the way of an elastic pacifism, and have been fairly common in the vocabularies of those who have seemed determined to maintain the Church's moral neutrality at any cost. The phrase has fitted happily into the exhortations of spiritual isolationists who, in an age of creative as well as destructive passions, apparently would have the Church "faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null."

"The Church, as such, is not at war" is an arresting utterance. It strikes the eye like a falling star and is as disturbing to intelligent religion as the bombing of St. Paul's. But that Christians should have debated it is more disturbing still. If it were true, would it not be as deadly an indictment as

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the Church has ever faced? Decidedly a confusing utterance, also! When is the Church not "as such"? What is it doing when it isn't "as such"? There is a hint of Humpty Dumpty's convenient philology, "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean." One astonished visitor at the conference, after listening to the discussion, wrote of "The Double-Crossing of the Delaware" and commented on this proposed declaration:

If the Church, fighting for its very life,  
Is at war, and the Church "as such," whatever that mean,  
Is not at war, then is the Church more rent than by all  
The schisms of the centuries.

Perhaps the visitor was not quite fair to the Delaware Conference; but what it refused to say, the social service committee of another conference said without the qualifying mystery of "as such": "The Church is not at war."

But wasn't it? Isn't it? When its members are in camps and fleets and battle lines around the world; when they are in plants producing guns and planes and bombs and everything else that war demands; when many of its clergy are with the troops and on the ships; when some of its members are in editorial offices directing support-the-war policies and focusing propaganda to stimulate throughout the nation the will to victory; when they are in emergency offices forwarding in scores of enterprises the total war effort; when they are in the Congress and the Senate which declare the war and enact the laws creating the greater army, the two-ocean navy, and a stupendous air force, and imposing the gigantic taxes required to maintain the war; when they are in the White House and the embassies and legations conducting around the world the innumerable negotiations that world-wide war involves; can it be true that the Church is not at war?

The question reminds an average man of the hide-and-seek philosophy with which erudite instructors entertained his youth by contending that a thing may be oblong, brown,

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hard, and heavy, as a table, or round, red, soft, and sweet, as an apple, or slim, slippery, dark, and cold, as an eel, and the thing-in-itself be nothing of the kind. Some such hang-over from adolescent delight in the mystifications of metaphysics must have been haunting the committee; for, having declared peremptorily that the Church is not at war, its report contained these further observations:

It would be unrealistic for us to attempt to speak on the relation of the Christian religion to social issues without frankly facing the fact that we cannot hope to function as a Church in the future if Hitler and the Axis win.

There is no possibility of realizing a reign of love unless the military power of the Axis is broken on the field of battle. The most loving thing to do even for Germans and Japanese is to break the power of their militarists.

The inclusion of those two statements in a declaration which had already affirmed that the Church is not at war reminds one of young Prince Frederick's remark in a letter to Voltaire, that it is not given to everyone to make the mind laugh. The Church cannot hope to function if the war is not won; the Church's purpose to establish a reign of love cannot be realized unless the military power of the Axis is broken on the battlefield; the most loving thing to do for Germans and Japanese is to break the power of their militarists—and still the Church is not at war! This looks like Humpty Dumpty laying it on the line. Only the shrew Petruchio tamed could travel this road:

Then, God be blessed, it is the blessed sun:  
But sun it is not, when you say it is not.

Or was it in the minds of the committee that the conflict by which the Church's future is to be saved is too unchristian for the Church to share, while waiting in exalted spirituality to enjoy the result? Is the most loving thing that can be

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done for Germans and Japanese darkly taboo for the Church? If the purpose of the Church is to establish a reign of love, why should it remain aloof from the one enterprise necessary before its purpose can be undertaken? Must the Church have no part in the struggle by which its life and function are preserved? Instead, is it to wait behind its respectable front to receive with untroubled conscience the goods for which it cannot go to war without sin?

If the Church hasn't been at war, why hasn't it? What has it to say for itself in the light of the Nazis' desecration of Christian sanctities, their repudiation of the Scriptures, their official rejection of Christianity, and their leaders' avowed intention of destroying it everywhere? Baldur von Schirach's boast is representative: "I am neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic. I believe only in Germany." Gunther Kern, the Nazi spy and fifth columnist in Norway, left the Church in 1942, giving as his reason, "I do not believe in God; I believe only in Adolf Hitler."<sup>1</sup> And what of the Nazi thesis, blatantly declared, that Jesus was only a negligible or even a degenerate Jew with a servile creed? That Hitler is a greater Savior? Although doubtless they have recognized that Herr Hitler's messianic claims may have been somewhat exaggerated, that does not alter the fact of their former repudiation of Jesus, which, it happens, they have not yet retracted. And what, on the other hand, of those Norwegian clergy, resisting from pulpit and prayer desk the German tyranny and sustaining at who knows what cost the morale of a people whose passion for freedom and devotion to religious faith have not faltered no matter how remote the day of their deliverance has seemed to be? What of those Polish priests burned to death because they were Polish priests? What of the Christianity which, driven underground in Europe, has exhibited the Christian heroisms and graces of its persecuted past? If the Church has not been at war, what do these things mean? And why has Niemöller been in a prison camp? And what is the Church for?

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Not all conferences seeking to prepare for a postwar world are as intelligently organized and free from folly as those at Malvern and Delaware, although little discrimination is made among them by the press, which regards them alike as sources of the day's news. Some of them seem to have been composed of eager enthusiasts who, in ignorance of indispensable facts, propose technics of action in which they have no experience, for conditions which they cannot foresee; and the results range from the ludicrous to the immoral. One which met shortly after the American declaration of war published among its demands that at the making of the peace all territory which had been taken by force by any nation during the war should be returned—but not at the cost of any violence, only with the consent of the taker. That a nation which had taken territory in war might not consent to its return seems not to have occurred to the amateur diplomats of the conference, and no provision was suggested for such a contingency. The irresistible force was to meet the immovable body, and the result would be the peace of the world.

The Ohio Pastors' Convention, in January, 1943, adopted the following statement as Article VI of its official pronouncement on the war and the peace:

We will impose on the peoples of Germany, Italy and Japan no penalties or indemnities other than war itself imposes. We offer them peace now based on one condition, namely that they get rid of their war leaders and enter with us a new order based on equality of opportunity for all—for so-called friend and so-called foe alike.

This is statesmanship and religion of a kind to make one gasp. It may be that economic conditions after the war will make indemnities or reparations impossible. It may be that the peace conference or administrative organizations associated with it can find some satisfactory alternatives. But to set before ravaged, starving peoples who have seen their

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countries devastated, their property destroyed, their cities and villages obliterated, their food pillaged, their men shipped like slaves to German factories, their girls despoiled en masse, the prospect that they are to receive no recompense; to suggest that Americans are thinking in terms of "*so-called* friend and *so-called* foe"—that is, first of all, to insult our allies by intimating that we are equally unsure of their integrity and of the Axis' guilt; and then it is to create in advance among the beneficiaries of victory the most serious possibilities of disagreements utterly fatal to a just social order and a durable peace.

The morality reflected in such a pronouncement as this of the Ohio pastors is as vicious as its political ideas are ridiculous. It is equivalent to telling the German people, their armies and civilians alike, that if—when they have exhausted the resources of the little countries their government betrayed and their military have pillaged; when they have wearied of the slaughter of the millions they have massacred; when they have left in once-prosperous and happy lands only a remnant of starving people possessing nothing but their memories and tears—if, then, as a matter of prudence, they will discard the leaders whom they have followed with enthusiasm as long as the plunder lasted, they will be received into an international order based on honesty, co-operation, and good will, with the same political and moral status as all the others. In fact the advantages of the peace and the essence of victory will be with them. They will have all that they have stolen from the nations they have overrun and will be credited with unimpaired virtue. If the gangs get rid of their Dillingers and Capones, they will immediately become good citizens and may keep the loot!

The average reader regards such pronouncements as possible only from congregations of the queer, more interested in debate than informed upon the facts of life. But they are not confined within the privileged consideration of assemblies. Out of the assemblies have emerged not a few indi-

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viduals with the unfortunate hallucination that personal virtue is the equivalent of specific knowledge and that Christian character and good delivery enable any preacher, teacher, editor, or professional youth leader to exercise the skills of diplomacy in ignorance of the historical, racial, and economic conditions involved in sound international settlements. The result is a discouraging number of happy prophets who have disregarded Rufus Jones's wise counsel against expecting secret messages from sociable angels and who exercise from time to time an elocutionary statesmanship that measures its success, not by application, but by applause. "The church," one of them has told us, "should not merge itself into either side as such, but should endeavor to get each to change and to be reconciled on a higher level. . . . If the church merges itself into either side in this war, at the close it will have lost its right of mediation. It must be sufficiently free to be the conscience of the state."<sup>2</sup> This reads like a neat little combination of the Delphic Apollo and Gracie Allen. For what does its author mean by the Church? He, like many another, is unable to escape from the deceptive convenience of a generalization called the Church but otherwise undefined. Yet he speaks of it as though it were a visibly limited and distinguishable body with a precise function, like the Supreme Court. What he has missed is the truth caught in the title of Lorna Lindsley's volume *War Is People*. The Church is the same people, and the first sentence in John Dos Passos' novel *Number One* points the fallacy of all this statesmanship by afflatus which uses words while ignoring the reality they represent: "When you try to find the people, always in the end it comes down to somebody." For the Church has no human existence and no practical meaning for the world except through the men and women who constitute its membership; and, in spite of their inclusion and activity in armies, war offices and enterprises, and legislatures prosecuting the conflict, are they to keep themselves serenely aloof from the war itself? And just



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how are they to do it? Although they are active in the labor and the panoply of war, are they by some personal magic or professional schizophrenia to remain holy neutrals whom no injustice or atrocity awakes to moral indignation? Or are they to limit their morality to indignation?

Lidice is obliterated. Wives and girls are taken by force and shipped like slaves from conquered countries to serve the brothels maintained for German soldiers. "Thousands of young girls and women have been returned to Poland pregnant. They were of no further use to the Germans." Inhuman cruelties are wrought on civilian populations. Sadism is made a favored form of recreation. The very language of truth, honor, integrity, and virtue is emptied of all meaning by the administrators and educators of the German Reich who boast of a purposed and practiced beastliness for which two thousand years of history have scarcely any parallel. They are enthusiastically supported, not merely by the younger generation trained in Nazi morals since 1933, but by millions of their countrymen, who enjoy the profits of the pillage of fellow Germans and the despoliation of neighboring lands betrayed and slaughtered.

This attitude of the German people needs emphasis if the international order after the war is to deal with realities and not fall into the error that defeated the peacemakers of Versailles. There is a very large political opposition to President Roosevelt in the United States; but the people as a whole, including his political opponents, are one with him as the leader of the nation in war. Our enemies cannot discriminate between us and our war leaders. Neither should we discriminate between the German people and their leaders. To identify them will doubtless be unjust to a small minority of Germans still in the Reich, but to make any distinction will work a far greater and more disastrous injustice. Rumors of anti-Nazi revolts in Germany have been heard from time to time, and such a revolt may come to pass. But it should not be forgotten then that there were no

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rumors of revolt but only adoration of the Fuehrer's messianic success as long as the spoils of treachery and conquest were coming in. Whatever the future may develop, it is to be remembered that no discontent in German armies, no articulate complaint or revulsion among German people, was roused by Nazi crimes in conquered lands. Whatever of the kind may sometime rise, nothing of the kind did rise until the retreat from victory and the reduction in the volume of plunder.

Yet the Church is not to "merge itself into either side as such but should endeavor to get each to change and to be reconciled on a higher level." Sanctity by separation! The Christianity of the pillar saints! "I, mein Werther, sit above it all; I am alone with the stars." This is not Christian wisdom; this is moral treason.

The fact is that from the beginning the most powerful antagonists of Germany and of Japan have been ready to be reconciled on a higher level, though again the convenient indefiniteness of language forbids certainty that the altitude to which they would agree is the same as that which looms so vaguely in this prophet's mind. But neither Germans nor Japanese recognize a common level on which they and their antagonists can meet. Each claims the status of a master race, and neither acknowledges a morality that does not support that claim. Nor, if they were to abdicate that claim, is there a higher level upon which in honor and integrity we could meet them until we have dealt righteously with the criminals on this lower level that echoes with the assassination of hostages, the violence of Gestapo gangs, the tortures of prison cells and camps, and the sobs of school girls whose enforced dishonor adds shame to the agony of shattered lives in starving homes. Nazi Germany is not reconcilable on any higher level than that which it now occupies; and if it were, between us and that higher level stand Hitler and Goering, Goebbels and Himmler and their companionable crew in every conquered land, with their dripping red

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hands. Between us and that higher level stand Nazi literature, Nazi working philosophy, and the morals made integral in national policy. Bella Fromm says:

German cultural and spiritual inheritance have been swept away. Our new literature describes the heroic deeds of tiny men. They assault minorities, destroy works of art, soil and pollute temples and cemeteries, glorify killers in the textbooks of children. . . . What would you expect from a people that approves the destruction of all that the centuries have built up? <sup>3</sup>

Between us and that higher level stands Kirsten Flagstad, now called the "Nightingale of Nazism," singing in the Royal Opera in Oslo to encourage Norwegians to enlist in German armies against Russia, while her husband takes his place beside her as Quisling's chief financial backer in the betrayal of their country.<sup>4</sup>

There remains the precarious hope that one day the Germans may experience a regeneration. We can impose military compulsion on them, we can police them for decades to come, but we cannot teach them democracy or any other system, we cannot show them how to live. Shall we put our trust in that other soul in the nation, never politically creative and now all but buried? It may be that it will assert itself once more and devise for the Germans a way of existence which will allow the rest of the world to look upon them without revulsion or pity, contempt or alarm.

But the results of such a renaissance, if indeed it is possible, will not be apparent until generations hence.<sup>5</sup>

Bella Fromm and Ingeborg Kayko, who wrote the above, are both Germans, intelligent enough to appraise their own people, and their appraisals are arresting.

Nevertheless, the Church must be "sufficiently free to be the conscience of the state"! And the Church is the clergy and lay membership severally related in their ecclesiastical organizations, and apart from them there is no visible Church and no influence of the Church to which the world

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is amenable. Accordingly, this bland pontification means that notwithstanding the moral horrors which Nazi Germany has committed as a matter of national policy and of which it boasts, the clergy and its lay members in all lands—particularly in the United States—in the armed forces and out, are to remain so completely neutral that everyone else will surrender to their combined moral and political judgment. History's most catastrophic conflict between civilized ways of life and armed atrocity, between the democratic ideal and the determination to organize the world in terms of force and servility to a self-ordained superior race, is in progress, affecting every part of the globe and every aspect of human life; and the men who watch the conflict without partisanship or participation, in cool detachment midway between right and wrong, will be appointed to adjudicate all differences when democracy and civilization shall have won! It reads like a lost paragraph from a speech of the Mad Hatter.

Sainthood by moral neutrality has never done much for the world, and promises to do less than ever. The Christianity which can remain aloof from active opposition to purposed and organized infamy, that can be reconciled to a people as conscienceless as bandits boasting their crimes and plotting new raids for loot, with no more expiation required than to stop raiding when the loot is exhausted, will get no hearing from men coming home from ships and armies and prison camps in foreign lands when the war is won. A private in an officers' training camp, about to be failed by the examining board, was asked by an indiscreet second lieutenant, "Why do you think you would make a good officer?" He replied with more resentment than logic, "Sir, I wrote my name in blood at Pearl Harbor. What have you contributed?" A bit on the melodramatic side, but rather convincing at that; and with implications! If it were possible for that vague generalization, the Church, to come to the end of the war with its soul unwrinkled and serene among remote idealisms, like some Harold Skimpole watching a private exhibi-

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bition of Plato's shadows in a cave, it would have, and would deserve to have, no place whatever in the reorganization of the relationships of life.

This eagerness to keep the Church from the sin and struggle of the world today has frequently found encouragement in the cliché that war is senseless and accomplishes nothing—a fallacy which even the most violent pacifist should be able to recognize and abandon. War is a continuation of national policy which other technics—diplomacy, trade agreements, ententes—have failed to establish. It is the supreme viciousness of humanity in the mass, but to say that it is senseless is to brand the policy of which it is an instrument and last resort—often an imposed and hated last resort—as also senseless. That, of course, has sometimes been true, but not often. To make the unqualified assertion that war is senseless is to brand the American Revolution as folly and China's resistance to the Japanese invasion and scheme of totalitarian order in the Orient as an unfortunate exhibition of nonsense which genuine intelligence would have avoided by surrender. To believe that war is always senseless is to repudiate history and our traditional ideas of honor. Leonidas, Cromwell, Washington, have fooled us long enough; Laval is our hero! Somehow the notion does not quite commend itself. It is not to the discredit of the Czechs that they would have preferred to imitate the folly of the Chinese than to have been compelled to accept the wisdom of Chamberlain and Daladier. The physical results would have been no different, but their national consciousness would have been more satisfactory.

War certainly accomplishes things. The American Revolution resulted in the American Republic. Nothing but war could have procured American independence in the eighteenth century, and the Revolutionary War cannot be considered either senseless or futile unless the Republic since 1783 is regarded as not worth the struggle which made it possible. The eighty-year conflict of the Netherlands, out of

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which the Dutch Republic rose and free Holland ultimately emerged, was not without intelligence and accomplishment on the part of the Netherlanders. Or is Motley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic* another tale told by an idiot? Dr. Freeman, in his magnificent biography of Lee, calls the great conflict of the sixties "this mad, criminal war," which it may very well have been. Undoubtedly it could have been averted had either North or South preferred peace and separation to principles which they regarded as so indispensable to their security and right that several millions of men were willing to die for their maintenance. But it was not averted, and it accomplished at least one result which could not otherwise have been achieved. Not the emancipation of the slaves or the economic supremacy of the North. Those results could have been far more easily and cheaply procured. The Civil War proved that the United States is a nation, not simply a federation of sovereign states, as its founders first imagined. It demonstrated that whatever states' rights may be, they do not include secession; and with the desperate sincerity of kindred peoples of equal devotion to commanding ideals, only war could have determined that.

Certainly the present war will have accomplished something. "The outbreak of the Greater East Asia war," the Tokyo radio announced at the beginning of the conflict, "may be said to be the beginning of the fight to put an end to Britain and America." The famous Tanaka Memorial, presented July 25, 1927, declared explicitly:

Japan cannot remove the difficulties in Eastern Asia unless she adopts a policy of "blood and iron." But in carrying out this policy we have to face the United States, which has been turned against us by China's policy of fighting poison with poison. In the future, if we want to control China, we must first crush the United States. . . . But in order to conquer China, we must first conquer Manchuria and Mongolia. In order to conquer the world, we must first conquer China. If we succeed in conquering China, the rest of the Asiatic and the South Sea countries

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will fear us and surrender to us. Then the world will realize that Eastern Asia is ours and will not dare to violate our rights. This is the plan left to us by Emperor Meiji, the success of which is essential to our national existence.

It is not without significance that the conference which wrought the Tanaka Memorial closed July 7, 1927, and that July 7, 1937, the Japanese created the "incident" at Lukou-chiao, with which they began their war on China. The tearful sentimentalists who, as will be noted later, sound off with such happy grief about everybody's being guilty of this war should relate their moral effervescence to the facts reflected and the conclusions implicit in the Tanaka Memorial. A victory of the Axis powers would accomplish a world the like of which we have never had. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece, France, Norway, and the Netherlands suggest the kind of a world it would be. It would be difficult, would have been difficult at any stage in the conflict, to convince the inhabitants of those countries that war accomplishes nothing.

Financially, war has by no means proved to be always unprofitable. On the supposition of Japanese victory, it would be impossible to overestimate the financial profit to Japan from her conquests in the Orient alone. What the oil and grain of the Caucasus and the Ukraine would mean to a victorious Germany has long been understood, and even failing these her gains have not been trifling. John T. Whitaker in his *We Cannot Escape History* makes the statement that the Germans have extorted from France alone, in every six months of their occupation, as much as they paid the Allies in more than six years by the terms of the Versailles Treaty. In the first year of the war, Whitaker declares, they collected from the conquered countries the entire cost of their armament program. Defeat in war is unprofitable and accomplishes nothing for the defeated; but in the light of *Mein Kampf* and the Tanaka Memorial, with the long-term preparation for conquest which they indicate, neither the

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Germans nor the Japanese are likely to regard their projects as senseless. The disastrous results of their war will prove to be due, not to the nature of war or to lack of intelligence or opportunity, but to their inability to protect their investment.

Even before the issue of conflict is decided, war registers a definite accomplishment—temporary, it may be, but nevertheless unmistakable. It creates work and revives or promotes prosperity. War profits may well be characterized as blood money, but the characterization does not alter the facts. Specious as the economic gains may be which accompany war, to many people it brings material and social satisfactions impossible to them under any other conditions. Edward Hallett Carr quotes a copy of the *London Times* issued when England was under its fiercest assault: "Save when immediate tragedy comes their way, an enormous number of ordinary peaceful citizens are personally, at this time, extraordinarily happy. There is work to be done now in this island by them."<sup>6</sup> Anyone living in any war-production area in the United States will bear witness to the same state of society here.

But, more important than all these immediate results which may vary in permanence and utility, the supreme accomplishment of war is that, as Herbert Agar put it, "war settles exactly what it was intended to settle; it settles who is to have charge of the immediate future."

Before intelligent judgment can be reached in respect to the Church's duty, "as such" or otherwise, in connection with the war, realistic and less romantic understanding of its causes is needed. The crusaders on lecture platforms and in eternal-youth assemblies have kept telling the world that we are all responsible—that it is the result of the sins of everybody, of the evils in which all the powerful nations have participated. The United States, they have informed us, is perhaps more flagrantly guilty than any other, probably because it is geographically more remote from the actual combat



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and tried so desperately hard to keep out. Practically every religious journal has been a wailing wall at which editors, correspondents, Old Subscriber, and 'A Disciple have been weeping over American sins ever since Poland was blitzkrieged. Pulpits, panels, and radio stations have rung with the penitential enthusiasm with which we are accustomed to confess sins that sound important but do not affect our private lives. Unfortunately, these avid oratorical confessions leave the impression that they are not so much the issue of genuine conviction as an elocutionary and literary technic; and we are not likely to recognize our real sins until we quit dramatizing those which, for the most part, are imaginary and sentimental. During the year following Pearl Harbor roving reporters, preachers, correspondents, lecturers, the whole fearless battalion of torchbearers—every one a Cassandra doubling in brass for Paul Revere—told us that "we" were responsible for the war. But none of them ever paused amid the tumult of his emotions to tell us just how. Congressmen were vociferous in exhorting the nation to sacrifice, interrupting their patriotism only to vote themselves pensions and demand X cards. Some of the more fervent defenders of democracy in its hour of trial were so absorbed in their holy mission that they did not take the trouble to vote. One earnest pacifist, condemning the unpardonable sin of the United States in its discrimination against the Negro, illustrated the depth of his personal contrition by condoning Germany's hostility to France because the French had sent colored troops into the Ruhr! All this may be part of the healthy self-criticism by which democracy survives and improves, but we shall not recognize clearly the specific wrongs, for the correction of which we are responsible, as long as we keep ourselves hot and hortatory over evils in general of which we are aware largely by guess and gossip.

There has not been lacking a bill of particulars as to the sins of which all Americans are guilty by reason of their membership in an unjust and sinful social order. There are

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the economic maladjustments for which the "have" nations are responsible; and as Germany, after Versailles, was among the "have nots" and we are eminently among the "haves," there can be no question as to American guilt. There are also the wrongs imposed upon Germany and Austria by the Versailles Treaty, to which America was a party. And there, shaking its gory locks like Banquo's ghost, is the League of Nations, assassinated by the refusal of the United States to enter it. These are charges which, as Lincoln wrote of the rat hole in his office, will bear looking into.

They are not without an element of truth, but it must be seen in perspective. There have been and continue to be serious economic maladjustments in the world, as the Atlantic Charter, notwithstanding its omissions, acknowledges. They have made disadvantaged peoples sympathetic toward revolution and easily responsive to the appeal of a proposed New Order in which their gains have been romantically described and their discomforts left to be discovered by experience when the alternatives are exhausted. Americans have had some share in the responsibility for those maladjustments. But the peoples who initiated the war did not do so until they believed that they had surmounted their disadvantages. The Tanaka Memorial makes no other inference possible as regards Japan. Though convenient blindness or the determined dishonesty of Nazi Germans refused to see their responsibility for the first World War, by 1936 Germany was 80 per cent self-supporting, according to a report made by the British Embassy in Berlin, to the consternation of the few Englishmen in high places who were not bewitched by the notion that Germany had to be kept strong in order that France should not be stronger. Europe under the Germans is not explained by economic maladjustments throughout the world. Economic needs flower in blitzkriegs only by order of statesmen with the morality of bandits. And not even economic needs can account for the crimes of concentration camps; tortures and assassinations at home; pillage,

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indecenty, and massacre abroad; and the revolt of a people against the moralities of civilized society and their own social tradition.

The Versailles Treaty—reflecting as it did the mind of Lloyd George, which he changed, according to General Foch, “as easily as he changed his shirt”; the uncompromising nationalism and political immorality of Clemenceau; and President Wilson’s “misreading and disregarding of political experience in the maelstrom of abstract thought”—was not a perfect instrument. But not even the amateur diplomats whose acute perception of its defects is wholly retrospective could have produced a better. Certainly the German-made Treaty of Brest Litovsk in 1918 and what has happened in France since 1940 do not encourage the belief that a victorious Germany would have done so. The truth is that the sinfulness of the Versailles Treaty has been greatly over-emphasized by patriotic internationalists whose utterances have demonstrated zeal rather than knowledge. The woes which have been so readily ascribed to the Treaty of Versailles have been due, for the most part, not to the provisions of the treaty, but to the failure of England, France, and the United States to enforce them. Apart from all other considerations, no defects of the Treaty of Versailles can account for the assassination of Dollfuss, the torture of Schuschnigg, the destruction of Austria. The treaty did not contain any provocation to the bombing of Rotterdam or the starvation of Greece. It did not evoke Quisling.

To discuss the League of Nations is to thresh very old straw, but its failure must be far more thoroughly understood than it has been if the next reorganization of national relationships and interests—whatever form or forms it may take—is not likewise to end in disillusionment and catastrophe. Time has already vindicated President Wilson’s prediction that “within another generation there will be another world war if the nations of the world do not concert the method by which to prevent it.” But it has also made

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plain his mistake in believing the League of Nations to be the method which would prevent war; and it has provided ample reason for retiring the decrepit fallacy that its failure was due to the refusal of the United States to participate in it. This fallacy has long commended itself to those who establish their moral judgments upon heroic disregard of facts, but the facts cannot permanently be disregarded. The romance of a lost cause does not forever conceal the reasons for its loss.

First of all, as Edward Hallett Carr has pointed out, the League was put together upon political and economic premises which, however effective they had been in other generations, had already failed before they were assembled into the structure of the League. The description which a highly intelligent Oriental prince gave of Singapore just before its fall is singularly applicable to the League of Nations: "a nineteenth-century organization run by privileged mediocrities, trying to cope with a twentieth-century crisis." The makers of the League, furthermore, neither perceived nor made provision for perceiving either peoples or their rights except as they constituted political organizations. Race is nothing like as important as Nazi Germany has tried to make it. But it is a great deal more important than the treaty makers at Versailles considered it; and their failure to recognize its genuine importance resulted in the interracial antagonisms within Czechoslovakia, and its precarious geographical existence, the fatal unrest and resentment in Hungary, and the ease with which unscrupulous German propaganda created the conditions that made betrayal and conquest a matter of course.

The League, as it was constituted, depended for its survival and success upon the agreement of the great powers, and their willingness and ability to co-operate in the enforcement of its decisions. Russia and Germany, however, were not admitted at the beginning, which demonstrated to those who understood what they saw, and what later became

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very evident, that France purposed to make the League a cordon of allies within which Germany should be unarmed and helpless, while England hoped to employ it as the camouflaged but reliable old business of the balance of power by playing Germany against France. As early as 1933 the camouflage was discarded when the Four-Power Pact took form, looking to "the establishment of a Concert of Europe by the four Western Powers, England, France, Italy, and Germany, to replace the League . . . and rule the Continent, solving incidental problems at the cost of territories east of Germany."<sup>7</sup> While the lighthearted idealists were rejoicing in their view of Utopia's jeweled bulwarks of disarmament and brotherhood, the realists were rebuilding behind the shining walls the old grim machineries of intrigue and force. What has received little attention but was no less vital is the fact that the entire enterprise of the League was so remote from, and inaccessible to, individual citizens that few had any living interest in it and none had any connection with it. For most of us, it was like a figure in the fourth dimension.

As if to make sure that the League should not deviate into success, the gentlemen at Versailles wove its charter into the text of the treaty of peace. President Wilson was reported to believe that by so doing he would defeat the Senate. Instead, he defeated the League itself by as notable an exhibition of personal courage and political folly as history is likely to preserve, for it was an attempt to combine inherent contraries. A treaty of peace is an instrument by which to end a war; and unless there has been a military stalemate, while the victors may renounce the spoils, they cannot avoid exercising positive dictation of terms. The League of Nations was a device for maintaining reorganized international relations in co-operation and amity, and this can be done only by mutual agreement. Regardless of formal concurrence on the part of signatories to a treaty, agreement cannot be permanently woven into an instrument of dictation.

But even if in the beginning there had been perfect har-

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mony unshadowed by the slightest displeasure or resentment, still in the course of time such a League would have had to make decisions adversely affecting one of its members here, another there; and decisions, although reached by democratic processes, have to be enforced. "A parliament of superparliamentarians without any instrument of authority; that is the talisman we received," wrote Clemenceau.<sup>8</sup> For the makers of the League rejected all authority more powerful than points of order. On the day therefore on which they voted against the maintenance of military force to sustain the League's decisions, Mr. Frank A. Simonds, the most perceptive of the correspondents covering the conference, cabled his newspapers the truth apparently unrecognized by his colleagues: "The Versailles Treaty is wrecked. The League of Nations is doomed." Its debacle was implicit in its structure. The participation of the United States in its membership would not have saved it. Had all of its members wanted it to succeed—and no one has yet been so absurd as to suggest that—it would still have failed for lack of power to enforce its decisions. "A League without bombers is a debating society." And although debates may cause a war, they cannot prevent one.

Nevertheless, while there has been too much and too false dramatization of universal iniquity as the cause of the war, fostering the impression that the Germans have been victims of the world-in-general instead of being, as they have been, rebels against the world, Americans have very genuine social sins. The magnanimity of the Washington government when the Chinese indemnity fund was used for the education of Chinese does not represent the only quality that has been exhibited in American relations with other nations. When one remembers the singular conduct of American "interests" in Mexico during the Díaz and Huerta regimes, and the curious but effective part reported to have been taken by the American ambassador in setting the stage for the murder of Madero, he will not boast extravagantly

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of the uninterrupted righteousness of our State Department. Within our own domain also we have not borne a bewildering likeness to Utopia. Americans have exploited labor, and American labor has been doing a handsome bit of exploiting itself. Americans have created sharecroppers and maintained slums. They have fostered monopolies, erected tariff walls, and forced prices to indefensible levels by collusion. They have neglected the education of Negroes, whom they have kept financially unable to educate themselves, and they have put almost insuperable difficulties in the Negroes' way of living by the exercise of abilities evoked by whatever education they have managed to acquire. Americans have Jim Crow cars and Jim Crow railway stations and Jim Crow motion-picture houses, and half a dozen lynchings a year. If there is any word which ought to haunt Americans, it is that menacing word of an ancient prophet:

Because of the oppression of the poor, because of the sighing of  
the needy,  
Now will I arise, saith Jehovah.

Democracy itself might well enter the quarrel against us. Lobbyists for business, labor, liquor, agriculture, and what have you, have too successfully superseded the democratic processes of intelligent discussion and legislation for the common weal, by presenting legislators the alternative of being either servants of bloc interests on behalf of divisive groups or patriotic but lame ducks; and legislative insight has readily perceived the inferiority of homespun patriotism as an alternative to continued public life. The list of our American social sins can be prolonged, in all seriousness, and there is ample reason for far keener and more intelligent repentance for them than the blithe and buoyant penitence-in-general of our platforms and religious press. But we cannot, as Bernard De Voto put it, "go back to the beginning and start again in an expiatory conviction that our civilization is false and tawdry, that the entire history of the

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United States up to now has been evil.”<sup>9</sup> We haven’t always bought the truth like Bunyan’s pilgrims in *Vanity Fair*. We haven’t always safeguarded freedom or sought justice or walked humbly with our God. But we can say, as the Archbishop of Canterbury has said of the English, that “we have so far believed in these things and honoured them that an appeal to them is never without effect in our country.”<sup>10</sup> And it is not Pharisaism to say that our national sins, real as they are, do not deserve the same moral condemnation as the Germans in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Greece. Because some Americans are not such perfect gentle knights as the one who rides illustrious forever in Chaucer’s tale, must all of us be handcuffed to the horde whose officers studied the campaigns of the Mongols and boast of the millions they have murdered and despoiled in laying waste a continent? Whoever happens to be speaking for the Church, whether it be a delegated conference or some spontaneous seer on an independent cruise of amateur statesmanship, ought not to cancel out the rape of Holland and the German holocaust through Central Europe with a crooked planter and his company store, or ask us to put a lynching by a Missouri mob on the same plane with the Nazis’ massacre of the Jews as a national policy. Because John Doe believes that a forty-hour week with double pay for overtime is an infamous labor schedule in wartime, because he thinks that Harry Bridges ought to be deported and that to explain Earl Browder’s pardon by saying that it was to foster American unity is a ridiculous and dishonest alibi on the one hand and, on the other, a dangerous disregard for justice, the professional mourners ought not to classify John Doe with Mr. Pecksniff or Pretty-Boy Floyd. They ought not to imply that neither Christianity nor common sense dare make any distinction between Jim Crow cars and the slaughter of hostages as a technic of government action. The conscience of the state—whatever that is—ought not to require sane men to be so free that they cannot discriminate between wholesale crime deliberately



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adopted as a war measure and economic injustices which society is continually reducing but has not yet wholly eliminated. That is the kind of churchmanship which, had the Bishop of London been present, would have kept him from interfering when Bill Sykes was clubbing Nancy, the kind of churchmanship which would agree that "a policeman who has committed adultery may not, in the performance of his duty, arrest a murderer."<sup>11</sup>

When all confessions have been received and filed, this war is no Topsy, growing up without intention by the un-directed energies of life; it was deliberately planned and initiated, and we did none of the planning or initiating. John Ruskin wrote very bluntly that "the first reason for all wars, and for the necessity of national defences, is that the majority of persons, high and low, in all European countries, are thieves." The reason he did not include America was probably that, while our wars with the Indians and Mexico were due to the same quality in Americans, those with England rose directly with the English. Prussia's wars in the nineteenth century, including that with France in 1870-71, which led to the creation of the German Empire by Bismarck's policy of blood and iron, substantiate Ruskin's pronouncement; and certainly Germany's record of spoliation in the present conflict and the satisfaction which the Germans at home have evidenced with the looting of their victims make any other explanation exceedingly difficult.

The time has long since passed when any my-country-right-or-wrong attitude could be justified; but there should now be some way of dealing "sharply," as the Puritans described their thoroughly effective technic with Charles I, with the my-country-always-wrong idealists who reiterate generalizations of disapproval with the air of high-pressure sibyls, apparently sure that if they say anything often enough it will have to be true. Personal integrity and nobility of purpose only make them all the more dangerous to sound popular convictions. Take this, for example:

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While talking with the department of state regarding a settlement between Japan and America just before the outbreak of war, I said: "Why don't you work out from your own principles of democracy to the situation, instead of allowing the Japanese to determine your conduct? You say: 'If the Japanese do this, we will do this; if the Japanese do that, we'll do the other.' You are allowing the Japanese to determine your conduct. That whole process leads down to war. Begin with your own principles and you'll probably find a way out." <sup>12</sup>

One could hardly be blamed for thinking it a cryptogram. What is the English for "work out from your own principles of democracy to the situation"? At least one of the alternatives to allowing the Japanese to determine your conduct would be to determine by your actions the conduct of the Japanese; and if the first leads down to war, why should the second be supposed to lead up to anything else? And where will one find a more complacent assurance of wisdom than this airy advice to the State Department to "begin with your own principles and you'll probably find a way out"? Unfortunately, a generalization, with all its rhetorical usefulness, cannot always meet the specific obligations of other people.

The information furnished by Ambassador Grew and the experiences of foreigners in Japan reported since Pearl Harbor have revealed the shallowness of knowledge out of which the conversation quoted came. The State Department has not amplified its explanation of the negotiations with Japan in the hope of preserving peace beyond its statement entitled *Peace and War*, and there is no stenographic report of the conversation. Such memoranda as the Department preserves concerning such interviews record, not the specific details discussed, but only the central ideas proposed and evoked. The Department's reply, through its officers who were interviewed, to the questions and suggestions put to them on this particular occasion, has been summarized as follows:

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For many years this Government endeavored constantly and consistently to persuade the Japanese Government that Japan's best interest lay in desisting from her activity of conquest and in adhering to a policy of peaceful international co-operation. Earnest efforts were made at every opportunity to make clear to the Japanese Government how this Government applied in actual practice the principles which this Government regarded as the only basis of sound international relations and to emphasize the benefits which Japan would stand to reap by shaping its course in accordance with those principles.

If "work out from your own principles of democracy to the situation" means anything more than words, this would seem to be precisely what it means. The facts, that is to say, are not that the State Department was allowing the Japanese to determine its conduct; it was not saying, If the Japanese do this, we will do the other. It was enunciating and illustrating the principles which "this Government regarded as the only basis of sound international relations." It was not determining the conduct of Japan; it was suggesting the benefits which Japan would reap by co-operating in accordance with those principles, which are, by the way, the principles upon which the nations now united against the totalitarian powers conducted their affairs before the war, and which have since been reiterated to the satisfaction of all but those totalitarian powers. That whole process led down to war, not because the principles were mistaken or the process wrong, but because the Japanese government, as the Tanaka Memorial makes utterly clear, had been committed, for the almost ninety years since the Emperor Meiji, to a policy of world conquest; and the only way to have avoided the war, soon or late, would have been to surrender process and principles alike, not to international good, but to an unscrupulous and pagan imperialism.

Such failures, sometimes to know the facts and sometimes to understand their implications when they are known, have too often characterized those who pass ready judgment on

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public men and matters of which they are but remote spectators. One does not need to question their sincerity or doubt their good intentions in order to realize how, from generation to generation, they illustrate Theodore Roosevelt's remark in one of his letters to Senator Lodge: "Our clerical brother is capable of showing extraordinarily little sense when he gets into public affairs."

But not even Theodore Roosevelt, who tossed off ex-cathedra dicta on everything from Byzantine architecture to Kadiak bears, seems to have realized that when his clerical brother has shown less than his ordinary sense in public affairs, it has not been so much in what he has said and done; it has been that, in those particular public affairs, he was generally engaging in the wrong business. Frederick Robertson's judgment of the ministry of his church ninety years ago is not without a wisdom applicable to the contemporary American clergy:

On large national subjects there is perhaps no class so ill-qualified to form a judgment with breadth as we, the clergy of the Church of England, accustomed as we are to move in the narrow circle of those who listen to us with forbearance and deference, and mixing but little in real life, till in our cloistered and inviolable sanctuaries we are apt to forget that it is one thing to lay down rules for a religious clique, and another to legislate for a great nation.

The minister's real business is to mind his own; but, in his eagerness to serve his day and generation, too often he has been active, or at least vocal, in enterprises for which he has neither responsibility nor equipment. Meanwhile the duties for which alone he has been commissioned become increasingly imperative, and without his performance of them the Good Society can be neither achieved nor maintained. Not a few of the explanations of the present catastrophe and the programs of social reconstruction which have been offered us since the first Nazi gesture was flung against

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the world have issued from inadequate knowledge and judgments by emotion rather than understanding. But if all of these herein recalled were utterly correct, they would not touch the causes of our crisis. Those causes lie far below the surface agitations of the time, in views of nature, social philosophies, and negations of value that make inevitable an ordered atheism of life. It is with these underlying causes that the postwar strategy of religion will be first concerned.

## II. ENEMY BASES OF SUPPLY

THE FOREGOING CHAPTER MAY SOUND LIKE ANOTHER barbaric yawp, not over the roofs of the world, but in some misanthropic mental dead end. But whatever may be the interpretation of the facts, they are eloquent in their unmistakable reflection of the superficiality and disorder of the more recent contributions which the pious and the patriotic have offered toward the creation of Utopia. The world of progress and an ameliorating culture, which had apparently survived the first World War, a few years ago was suddenly dominated by two quite unprogressive and ruthless factors—force and suffering; and homiletical minds, as unperceptive as British cabinet members and American congressmen, were caught completely off their guard. Like Mark Twain's "Innocents" abroad, hurrying in dishabille to see the sunrise over an Alpine peak, these also found themselves staring in confusion at a sunset, and at a sunset behind black clouds livid with lightning flashes and ominous with the thunder of insatiable guns.

The idealism with which tradition and time have clothed the American and French revolutions, the religious enthusiasm which, from the Wesleyan Revival until perhaps a generation ago, bore periodic witness to the vitality of Protestantism, have become little more than rumors from legendary epochs; and the moral reserves from them, on which we had been living, seem now to have been exhausted. The age of science and machinery has culminated in tanks, submarines, and bombers; and the record of national superiority is written in ravaged lands and the ruins of once-great

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cities. Ruthless force in gigantic armament and armies is the supreme instrument of racial philosophies and ambitions that deny the value of the achievements of intelligence which, heretofore, have been evidence of the greatness of mankind. Catastrophe, not merely to armies or fleets or capitals, but to civilization itself, has become commonplace. We are inured to irreparable tragedy. One thinks of literature and scholarship, and remembers that Louvain is again a desolation; of art, and the Louvre is pillaged; of architecture embodying a magnificent and humane tradition, and Guildhall and the Temple are destroyed; of music, and recalls that Paderewski died in exile.

The story of refugees and massacres has been too deeply burned into the minds of men to be forgotten in a millennium. On three continents the agonies of the wounded and the shallow graves of the dead record the march of conquest and defeat. From stockades and prison camps the cries of countless prisoners beat up to brazen skies. Populations still huddle in modern catacombs as crowded cities rock to the tempest of aerial invasion; and where for generations were smiling countrysides and prosperous towns, stripped and maddened people watch their children die and feel the one desperate ambition to keep themselves alive.

To recite these facts is to tell an old and now tedious story, but it is easier to be bored by them than to face them without despair of human nature and the future of the world. Our theology, for the first time, has been confronted with the atheisms of history and experience. Consoling doctrines seem to evaporate in the hot winds of reality. So much that men believed and built their lives upon has disappeared beneath a savagery we thought was outgrown long ago. The bombs that blasted the cathedrals have blown our Christian optimism away. The concentration camps have given the lie to our faith in humankind. Our basic assumptions have been contradicted by events, our moralities successfully disregarded, our language evacuated of its decent meanings,

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our ethics discarded as the defense mechanism of a slave society. Fear, disbelief, cynicism, are calling across the world with an arresting, new appeal. And it has been easy to mistake our antagonists. The violence of totalitarian war, its gigantic armaments, the magnitude and sweep of its armies, the economic evils declared to be its origin, are not our enemies. Our enemies are the totalitarian mind and the atrophy of morals inevitably associated with it; and these are not confined to Germany and Japan but in them simply have their most savage incarnation.

In Germany the totalitarian mind, by calculated repudiation of the ideals and ethics approved by the experience of millenniums of civilization, has produced the moral apathy. In Japan it is joined with a rejuvenated paganism to issue in an even more vicious inhumanity. But it is the mind of the totalitarians which constitutes the menace to the life and culture of the world. And no concentration of force aimed only at military victory; no statesmanship which purposes only new national orders, international institutions and agreements, and economic reforms; no religion which seeks from totalitarian offenders only repentance and reparation for atrocities committed, will reach the major objective without the capture of which there can be only tentative victory and no secure reordering of life.

Nor can the major objective be reached without the forces of religion, for the totalitarian mind is neither a social accident nor a perversion of intelligence. It is not a mental aberration of the ignorant nor the criminal cleverness of the malicious. It is the mind of very able men who have accepted and integrated two powerful ideas, each of which has a long history and can assemble many stubborn facts in its support. It is the mind of men who determined to organize and implement those ideas into an effective social order.

The first of these ideas is that the conduct of men and societies is determined essentially, if not wholly, by the necessity of satisfying basic physical needs; and there is so



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much truth in the idea that all history can be read in its support and a great deal of history must be so read. The majority of historians from Buckle to the Beards would so agree. Ancient historians regarded Abraham as a lonely figure sublimely obedient to the mysterious will of God; modern scholars see him as the forefront of an emigration pushed out by economic pressure from the crowded civilization of Chaldea to the sparsely settled lands beyond the frontier. Ancient historians described the exodus of the Israelites as a majestic religious movement, accompanied by miracle and safeguarded by superhuman providence; modern students perceive it as the revolt of a subject population, struggling for a generation into economic security and a coherent national order. Fifty years ago school children were taught that the Crusades were spontaneous outbursts of religious devotion determined, in a flame of spiritual zeal, to vindicate Christianity in the land of its origin. Now the Crusades are explained as the pageantry in which medieval Europe dressed its repeated attempts to wrest the highways of commerce from the East. What imperial Germany sought, before the first World War, with its Berlin-to-Bagdad railway, what Nazi Germany has designed in its enslavement of the Balkans, Western Europe attempted six hundred years ago, with the pomps and pious symbols of the Crusades.

The Pilgrim Fathers came to New England for freedom of conscience and worship, but the London Company paid the early bills and supplied the equipment. Behind the spiritual adventure and freedom was the pressure of economic need that could be met in new lands and new fishing grounds. The eloquence of Webster and Hayne, the intrigues of Calhoun and Clay, the antagonistic loyalties of Davis and Sumner, and the patriotic demonstrations of senators and states have clothed our Civil War in drama and romance; but the determining forces were the cold, unsentimental necessity of cotton growers for fresh lands, and the struggle between Northern industry and Southern agriculture for

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political control. The glamour of the advancing frontier, peopled by homespun heroes resolved to be free men in a free country, no longer hides the fact that free homesteads, gold mines, timber claims, and cattle ranches, by which moneyless and landless men could escape the debts and taxes of the East, were compelling factors. The significant word for the development of America, as for the older world, has been, not freedom, democracy, patriotism, or religion, but markets!

Much of our Federal legislation since 1934 and many of the decrees by executive authority alone have been revolutionary in character, more and more bitterly creative of class divisions than legislative and executive action before this period, and from time to time the results have been as disastrous as the theorists responsible were absurd. But they have thrown into higher light the reality of the economic forces which determine history and give society its forms and institutions. The one "must" stronger than a president's order or a senator's protest is that a man must eat! From that there is no escape. The demand for enough to eat registers in every enterprise of society. It has built our factories and stores, our schools and jails and brothels. It has directed our amusements and destroyed our once-quiet Sabbaths. It has advanced our frontiers, written our laws, colored our newspapers, and cast a shadow over our churches. When a people feels or is deceived into believing that it feels the urge of inexorable physical want while its lands are infertile or inadequate, where incessant labor does not produce enough to sustain an increasing population, when no vacant continents invite new Mayflowers and no frontiers are left, then Chinas are invaded, Abyssinias are overrun, and Polands die beneath the feet of conquerors shouting "*Lebensraum!*"

The second idea integrated in the totalitarian mind is that of the inherent nature and necessity of the state to control every individual, determine every institution, direct every social energy to the state's own survival, which must take

precedence over the life and welfare of all individual citizens, the prosecution of all other enterprises, and the rights of all other social orders. It is the idea of absolute monarchy enlarged to the absolutism of the ruling minority. It is an idea which has registered unmistakably in the concentration camps, in the torture and killing of dissenting Germans, in the ruthless destruction and confiscation of Jewish property and the massacre of Jews, in the control of education as the most effective instrument of political propaganda, in the burning of books and the regimentation of the press. It is an idea which has been implemented in a state consisting in an unscrupulous and entrenched minority controlling every source of production, every means of distribution, every agency of knowledge and "culture."

Before these grotesque but terribly practical realities register so fatally in life, what were feelings of resentment against economic condition and political theories, and emotional criticism of traditional technics of government, become a definite philosophy of materialism and power. These vicious totalitarians, as technically competent as they are ethically depraved, seemed to leap upon the world like bandits in the night. The blitzkrieg in Poland, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor while envoys were in Washington discussing ways of peace, had the appearance of unpremeditated outbursts of passion. Not only in surprise and slaughter, but in their wanton destruction of priceless and irreplaceable treasures from the achieving past, they have been like beasts, both savage and inhuman. We have had a desperate and breathless feeling that their vast dislocation of organized life had burst upon us abruptly and unforeseen.

We know now, and should have known from the beginning, that there was nothing sudden about either the German or the Japanese assaults on civilization except our own astonished recognition of what the signs had meant which we so stoutly had ignored or misread. To the contrary, the cataclysm had long been in preparation and had not been

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wholly unforeseen. Thirty years before the bombs fell on Pearl Harbor and Singapore surrendered to the Japanese, Homer Lea, that thwarted but prophetic genius, described almost precisely what we saw happen in the Pacific. Mussolini did not spring full formed from any Jove or jackal. Hitler and Goebbels and Goering and Himmler are not Teuton Melchizedeks, without father or mother, beginning of days or end of life. Dr. Reinhold Schairer reminded the Delaware Conference that Nicolai F. S. Grundtvig, Danish poet, pastor, and, in his old age, bishop, more than a century ago prophesied that the Germans would kill themselves by "educating youth in the spirit of a gang of Roman warriors who believe that the whole rest of the world lives but to serve them, to be dominated by them."<sup>1</sup> Europe's marching armies, its massacred populations, its enslaved bodies and regimented minds are the response of a generation to voices and the vicious ambitions and hopeless fears they have aroused.

The way of life into which these voices have driven eighty million Germans would be incredible if we had not seen them walking in it to the music of their own enthusiasms. The freedom which alone initiates and sustains genuine culture, the distinction of right and wrong without which social organization and co-operation have been proved impossible, the moral controls which evoke and protect personal character, the affections which create and maintain the family, religion which affirms and fosters nobler verities than physical experience and obligations more precious than personal desire—all are irrelevant, the totalitarians say, to personal life and essential social permanence. One reality is inexorable—physical existence; one claim is paramount—physical need; one authority is impregnable and right—physical force. The virtues and the vices alike are myths, and the rights of man a lost illusion. There is no right but possession, no force but force, no morality but power. It is the morality of the barnyard, the ethics of the aquarium and the zoo; but it has

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marched malevolently over half the world and threatened all of it, not Europe alone or Asia.

Behind what were the ethical uncertainties of North Americans, their doubts of their own democracy, their disrespect for their once-proud and cherished traditions, their rejection of the moral standards and restraints by which Puritanism had made possible the strength and growth of North American civilization, have been very compelling voices. They have declared philosophies which the pious have denied and the complacent have ignored but which have entered unmistakably into the contemporary mind and have been reflected in contemporary life. Behind the totalitarian assault upon civilization and the atrocities it has involved, the most effective forces have been not Quislings but creeds.

Behind every army, at Waterloo or Gettysburg or the Marne or storming Rommel's defenses on the height of Djebel Ang, near at hand or distant, are its bases of replacement and supply; and no campaign is permanently won while the enemy controls his bases. No postwar strategy will win the new order and security which the Allied nations have projected as their aim until it has destroyed the philosophies that sustain the apotheosis of force and the technic of terror which called forth the Allied arms. Tennyson wrote:

Well roars the storm to those that hear  
A deeper voice across the storm.

But there are deep voices sounding through the entire totalitarian world and structure that, far from promising well, have vitalized the philosophies out of which have come the malignant humors and mad ambitions bringing this holocaust upon the world. As regards Japan, that is taken for granted. It is the assumption upon which Christian missions exist and work. The Christian missionary enterprise is the effort of the Christian churches to change the philosophies of non-Christian peoples. With Germany quite different

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technic is required. Through Nazism—its theory and its social expression—several significant voices speak, and all must be heard.

One of them is that of a minor official of sixteenth-century Florence, secretary of the committee that dealt with foreign affairs—a man who traveled much on matters of state from government to government, who saw much, did a great deal, but did not greatly impress his contemporaries; a man who, in the rapid alternation of tyrant and democracy in Florence, attempted to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds and who died, a lonely, impoverished, and embittered spirit whose literary works, written in his period of misfortune in the hope of preferment which they did not win, have colored the political thought of four hundred years. The man, of course, is Machiavelli, a slim, dark figure moving through the spacious days and devious politics of Renaissance Italy, an actor in its drama, a spectator of its magnificence, having no part in its perilous aristocracy but out of his experience and observation of affairs giving permanent expression to its political theory. For four centuries he has been the spokesman of the ruthless philosophy which still directs the governments of the world.

That philosophy, condensed into a single statement, is that the science of government, like the science of mathematics, has no relation to, or concern with, the morality that should control the actions of individuals. Machiavelli was the first in modern times, as Symonds put it,

to formulate a theory of government in which the interests of the ruler are alone regarded, which assumes a separation between statecraft and morality, which recognizes force and fraud among the legitimate means of attaining high political ends, which makes success alone the test of conduct, and which presupposes the corruption, venality and baseness of mankind at large.

It is not always fair to isolate quotations from context as

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illustrations of a writer's thought, but it can be fairly done with Machiavelli. He says:

A ruler who desires to maintain his position must learn how to be other than good, and to use or not use his goodness as necessity requires.

A prudent ruler neither can nor ought to keep his word when it is hurtful to him, and the causes which led him to pledge it are removed.

If a ruler succeeds in establishing and maintaining his authority, the means will be judged honorable and approved by everyone.

He who commits violence for purposes of destruction does verily deserve censure, but not he who commits violence in order to establish security.

The joker in this last utterance is that what or whose security is not identified, and we are brought directly to the candid fact that it is the security of those who commit the violence. On this principle every atrocity of Nazi concentration camps, torture, assassination, and pogrom, every savagery of Japanese bayoneting prisoners of war, can be justified. And it is impossible not to recognize the significance in contemporary America of Machiavelli's observation that "to be liberal with the property of others adds to your reputation."

This is the voice of sixteenth-century Italy, but it is the voice also of every generation of statecraft and practical government since. Frederick the Great, Napoleon, Talleyrand—notwithstanding Professor Ferrero's recent defense of him—Metternich, Disraeli, the statesmen who launched the avalanche of 1914, Clemenceau, Lenin, Stalin, Lloyd George, Hitler, the military group industriously destroying Japan, Homer Lea, who wrote that a victorious army should leave the citizens of an enemy country only their eyes to weep

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with—all have shared this theory of statecraft, this principle of action which has armed the contemporary outrages on the world. The conception of society and political conduct which a disappointed, disillusioned secretary wrote in the lonesome poverty of a Florentine chamber more than four hundred years ago is no closet theory, no curious literary episode. It is the realism with which the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, imitated Napoleon by practicing that for which it condemned him and, by disregarding the claims of nationality and race, began the long series of political and military tragedies which have been so constant in Europe ever since. It is the realism of the Congress of Berlin, which, sixty-three years later, planted the seeds that blossomed in 1914 in the pistol shot at Sarajevo and the war that followed. Mussolini was reported to have made Machiavelli the subject of a thesis for a doctor's degree. Whether he did or not, his Italy was a Machiavellian product. Hitler told Hermann Rauschning that he had not only read but studied *The Prince*, saying that it is indispensable for every politician. This is the realism of Brest Litovsk in 1918 and of Versailles in 1919; and notwithstanding the ostentatious humility and peace-in-our-time sentimentalism and self-deception of Neville Chamberlain and his fellow appeasers, it is the realism of Munich and the betrayal of Czechoslovakia.

In the light of this living past, all our contemporary blueprints of economic Arcadias, the multiplying paper combinations of homiletical righteousness and amateur revolution, and even joint utterances of presidents and premiers leave considerable to be desired in the way of confidence. For the political theory of Machiavelli thrusts its roots into very deep and ancient and universal convictions. "Men are more prone to evil than to good." "Whoever organizes a state or lays down laws in it, must necessarily assume that all men are bad, and that they will follow the wickedness of their own hearts, whenever they have free opportunity to do so." That is Machiavelli—to all of which Paul and Augustine



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and Martin Luther and the Westminster Divines and John Wesley would agree. For Machiavelli's political theory, like Reformation theology, stands upon the assumption of the total depravity of men. But it declares its contradiction both of Reformation theology and of all Christian experience and faith. All men are bad; they will follow the wickedness of their own hearts whenever they have opportunity to do so. Therefore they must be repressed, enslaved to a directing will, regimented into an order within which the individual has value only as an instrument of the state.

But Machiavelli's is not the only voice shouting through the thunder of the world today. What we hear is not a solo but a chorus, not a man but a mob. Three hundred seventeen years after Machiavelli died in disillusionment amid the sins and splendors of the Renaissance, Friedrich Nietzsche was born in Bismarck's Germany; and his voice has had no small part in determining the fate of modern nations. An emotional, versatile personality, he spent his life in enthusiasms which, one after another, he outgrew. The son of a clergyman, he early shed all the religious inheritances of his birth except their accusing memories and cried through every book he wrote that God was dead. It is his voice which, more powerfully than any other of the nineteenth century, has asserted itself in the Germany that brought the present catastrophe upon mankind. His philosophy is an active passion laying hold on actual life; it is not only a thinkable collection of ideas but, for these years of violence and evil, a program of society marching defiant and scornful across the world.

It also begins, although Nietzsche may not have recognized it, side by side with Machiavelli and Martin Luther, Augustine and John Wesley, in the belief that mankind is in a very bad way, from which it must be delivered. Nietzsche, of course, was thinking particularly of European mankind. But instead of deliverance by suppression and tyranny as Machiavelli proposed, Nietzsche will have it by raising a ruling class into a new society which is to constitute, in itself,

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a higher order of life. To him good and evil relate only to the fortunes of this ruling class. By good he means whatever is advantageous to it, by evil whatever is disadvantageous to it. It is an echo from Nietzsche when one hears Hitler declaiming that nothing is good which is not good for the German *Volk*, and everything is good which is good for the German *Volk*. Nietzsche's good—and Hitler's—has no connection with the ethics and morality that have governed the civilization of the centuries. It does not include love or justice or modesty but, to the contrary, pride, courage, self-sufficiency, stubbornness of will. Nietzsche characterizes the Golden Rule as the maxim of the herd.

Very naturally the new society which Nietzsche would raise for the deliverance of mankind involves a denial of the rights of man. His ruling society is to be built upon purity of race, recruited from pure blood and specially trained. It is to be kept pure by eugenic methods and is to rest upon a great body of slave labor. In this society there are to be two superior orders: first, a few extraordinarily elite, of courage all compact, who are to be its philosophers and rulers; second, a warrior class. Both of these classes are to be indifferent to, and free from, the morality of the herd. They are to be beyond good and evil. He could hardly have drawn a more accurate picture of Nazi Germans if he had had them before him. Hitler, on the other hand, might have had a copy of Nietzsche before him when he said, as Rauschning quotes him:

There will be a *Herren*-class, an historical class tempered by battle, and welded from the most varied elements. There will be a great hierarchy of party members. They will be the new middle class. And there will be the great mass of the anonymous, the serving collective, the eternally disfranchised, no matter whether they were once members of the old *bourgeoisie*, the big land-owning class, the working class, or the artisans. Nor will their financial or previous social position be of the slightest importance. These preposterous differences will have been

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liquidated in a single revolutionary process. But beneath them there will still be the class of subject alien races; we need not hesitate to call them the modern slave class. And over all of these will stand the new high aristocracy, the most deserving and the most responsible Führer-personalities.<sup>2</sup>

Nor is it merely a general social likeness. Nazism and Nietzsche's prospectus of his new society are remarkably alike in details as to morality. On the night of November 25, 1942, German Propaganda Minister Joseph Paul Goebbels broadcasted by the Berlin radio an address to the German people directed to the reinforcement of their morale in the face of the accumulating military reverses in Russia and Africa. In the course of the address he said:

It is he who approaches his objective never looking to the left or right, and justifying his actions by their success rather than by morals, who has the advantage in war. . . . It is not so much a matter of what is moral and decent but of what promises success. . . . In the long run it is the success which is decisive, not only with regard to victory or defeat, but also in regard to right or wrong.

Gregor Strasser was one of the original Nazis, a comrade of Hitler in his early struggles and prison experience, ranking in importance then second only to Hitler himself. He was among those liquidated in the purge of 1934. In an official conference with the Austrian Prince Ernst Rüdiger von Starhemberg, attempting to enlist Rüdiger in the Nazis' preparations for the absorption of Austria, Strasser said:

We are talking politics, and I think we both agree that in politics there is no such thing as loyalty or disloyalty. You won't get far if you bring the ideals of the aristocratic code into political life. In politics it is expediency which counts. Success is the one criterion; everything which leads to success is right and what jeopardizes it is wrong.<sup>3</sup>

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Is there no connection between such opinion and Nietzsche's statement: "The falseness of an opinion is not, for us, any objection to it; it is here, perhaps, that our new language sounds most strangely. The question is, how far is an opinion life-furthering, life-preserving, perhaps species-rearing"?

No comment need be made on the Germans' repeated quotation in recent years of Nietzsche's words: "Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars—and the short peace more than the long. . . . War has done more things than charity. Not your sympathy, but your bravery, hath hitherto saved the victims." It is pertinent, however, to remember Hitler's avowals, such as: "War is eternal, war is universal. There is no beginning and there is no peace. . . . War is the origin of all things." "But I want war. To me all means will be right." <sup>4</sup>

Toward Christianity, Nietzsche's attitude, on the whole, is one of contempt. While he wrote the sentence, so often quoted without reference to its context, that there has been only one Christian and he died on the Cross, Nietzsche regarded Jesus as decadent and insane. "I call Christianity the one great curse, the one intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct of revenge, for which no expedient is sufficiently poisonous, secret, subterranean, mean—I call it the one immortal blemish of mankind."

Professor Crane Brinton has said that the Nazis have found a use for Nietzsche's words which he never intended to provide; but who knows? Perhaps he would only be disgusted by the kind of men who find support in his words; the words, nevertheless, are there to support them. Among the earliest and most constant of the social emphases of Nazism are its concern for increasing the number of German births, its relegation of women to domesticity and particularly to child-bearing, its attempt to reduce marriage to a ceremony devoting procreation to the service of the state. Nietzsche could not consistently have disapproved, for he proposed that mar-

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riage should be entirely for breeding and not a matter of affection at all. Side by side with this Nazi concern for eugenic breeding is its revolting though logical sterilization of undesirable types and its official killing of the helpless and incurable. Is there no connection between this and Nietzsche's admonition that "society, as the trustee of life, is responsible to life for every botched life that comes into existence"? He says:

It should in many cases actually prevent the act of procreation, and may, without any regard for rank, descent, or intellect, hold in readiness the most rigorous forms of compulsion and restriction, and, under certain circumstances, have recourse to castration. . . . Not contentment, but more power; not peace at any price, but war; not virtue, but efficiency. . . . The weak and the botched shall perish: first principle of our humanity. And they ought even to be helped to perish.

And when you read Nietzsche's half-proud, half-contemptuous remark that the profound, icy mistrust which the German provokes as soon as he arrives at power, even at the present time, is still an aftermath of that inextinguishable horror with which for whole centuries Europe has regarded the wrath of the blonde Teuton beast, you recognize the source of Hitler's ideal youth:

Violently active, dominating, intrepid, brutal youth—that is what I am after. Youth must be all those things. It must be indifferent to pain. There must be no weakness or tenderness in it. I want to see once more in its eyes the gleam of pride and independence of the beast of prey.<sup>5</sup>

Any adequate account of Nietzsche and his thoughts would require a volume, but even as condensed and casual a survey as the foregoing will make it impossible not to recognize his voice, amplified into a hurricane of vehemence, in the storm of violence and pillage released by Germany upon

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the world. His philosophy of race and the will to power was the faith, felt rather than comprehended, of those ruthless troops that burned into history the rape of Vienna, the slaughter of Prague, and the holocaust of the Netherlands. It is the malicious obsession which, during these recent years, has again exacted the immemorial martyrdom of the Jew. It is the calculated dishonesty which has transformed the once-noble scholarship of Germany into a derision and a lie. It is the source of what was the insolence of Berchtesgaden and Berlin and of the organized brutality of armies that have made Europe a battlefield and wilderness.

Machiavelli and Nietzsche have given the twentieth century a political theory and a philosophy of race and ruthlessness; but there are very many minds, the majority of minds, in fact, upon which they do not register. They are voices speaking through gigantic events but are intellectually too remote, perhaps too foreign, to be appreciated by many people. It is the events, not the voices speaking through them, that make the newspaper headlines.

There is another voice which the multitude does hear, for the most part without clearly identifying its significance, a voice that speaks through contemporary fiction and has insinuated into the great body of a generation's literature an arresting contradiction of what hitherto was most surely believed. It is the voice of Thomas Hardy.

Hardy always saw the tears of things and felt the tragic helplessness of mortals in the grasp of circumstance—an equipment indispensable to the genuine artist. But he closed his eyes to human responsibility in the evocation of circumstances. He found no freedom in the will, and human choices were for him but false faces concealing the sardonic features of accident and chance. He wrote one day in his personal journal the suggestion of a work to be undertaken in which he would "view the Prime Cause or Invariable Antecedent as 'It' and recount its doings"; and sixteen years later the suggestion emerged as *The Dynasts*. In it he de-

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scribed the Prime Cause as the "Iago of the Incorporeal World," "the viewless, voiceless Turner of the Wheel." Through a character in the drama he addressed mankind:

O Innocents, can ye forget  
That things to be were shaped and set  
Ere mortals and this planet met?

Stand ye apostrophizing That  
Which, working all, but works thereat  
Like some sublime fermenting vat

Heaving throughout its vast content  
With strenuously transmutive bent  
Though of its aim insentient?

This conception of life as meaningless, very closely akin to von Hartmann's philosophy of the Unconscious, had come to an earlier expression in the novels *Jude the Obscure* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, but with a difference. The Prime Cause in *The Dynasts* is blind, unforeseeing Fate, "luckless, tragic chance." In *Tess* it is a semirefined Setebos, more exquisite in its taste for torture than Browning's Caliban conceived it—a monster whose diabolical temper is disclosed in the sentence with which Hardy ends the scaffold scene and which his later explanations did not excuse: "The President of the Immortals, in Aeschylean phrase, had finished his sport with Tess."

A modern world, religious and irreligious alike, has repudiated Jonathan Edwards' portrayal of God as torturing, with evident enjoyment, the lost in hell; but a considerable portion of it has accepted Hardy's Fate, which does not wait for the other world but tortures its victims here and now. Hardy, like Nietzsche and Machiavelli, stands on what Bertrand Russell would call the firm foundation of unyielding despair because he knows that humanity is evil and in an evil way. But where the Italian would save it by political

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suppression and tyranny, and the German by the evolution of a superior race, Hardy sees no salvation at all. He believes, with Calvin, that all is predestined,

That things to be were shaped and set  
Ere mortals and this planet met.

But all is predestined by blind, insentient Fate; and Fate, as some one long since said, is simply God without character.

Hardy, of course, is little read now except by those whose moral judgments, one way or another, are fairly well established. But since his day the novelists of social revolt, the realists to whom only the amoral and the evil are real, the writers of psychological fiction, and the whole sex and sewerage group have become powerful forces in the literature that reaches great numbers of readers. It is a fiction which, to youth and to older minds that have lost their youth but kept their adolescence, gives impulses to moral compromise and to irregularities of conduct which popular psychology a few years ago justified as self-expression. It is a fiction which reaffirms Pope's aphorism with a contradictory and viciously attractive meaning, "Whatever is, is right"—right because inevitable! Violence, weakness, immorality, disguised in conciliatory and pleasing language, have lost their significance because they have been separated from personal responsibility.

We are but thistle-globes of Heaven's high gales,  
And whither blown, or when, or how, or why,  
Can choose us not at all.

It may be that the more serious peril to our civilized ways of life is not so much from the philosophies, so militant now in material catastrophe, as from the preparation for them which has been made in contemporary minds by this literature of the time, the deadlier effect of which is not in its candor but in its creation of a controlling, if not always



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avowed, conviction of necessity and the absence of moral responsibility.

This peril was greatly augmented by the vogue of Mr. Clarence Darrow, a man of ability and humanitarian purposes which lacked nothing of publicity, although not always the honest truth seeker of the Darrow legend. Much good may be said of his social-mindedness; but, as the admiring editor of *The Nation* wrote, "he will go down as the man who could work miracles for the defense in murder trials," and, again, he "did more than anyone else to popularize the basic social fact that it is the environment that fashions criminals."

But one day Mr. Darrow found himself employed in his humanitarian capacity to defend two brilliant university students, of very wealthy families in what is called an advantageous environment; and the environment theory wouldn't do. He worked enough miracle, however, to save convicted criminals from execution, securing for them life imprisonment instead, by persuading a court that clients who had planned and committed a particularly atrocious murder for the sake of a thrill were only irresponsible automata, who beneath the fantasy of individual freedom were moved by compulsions the power, direction, and issue of which were irresistibility determined by their entire past.

The seriousness of the incident did not lie in the fact that such an argument convinced the court; it lay in the acceptance, apparently without dissatisfaction, of such an argument to such a consequence by the major portion of the public and a press which seemed more eager to applaud the attorney that to explore the validity and implications of his logic.

It is impossible to prove the reason for this attitude on the part of the public; but it will hardly be denied that this disposition to relieve the individual of rigid moral responsibility, not only because of environment and heredity, but by a positive though not always coherent philosophy of deter-

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minism, is to be discovered more widely than in former years. It could not be demonstrated, but it would also be difficult to deny, that this rather inarticulate philosophy of determinism has coincided with the range of another mentally regimenting voice, that of John Dewey.

Professor Dewey's little volume *A Common Faith* received very favorable criticism even from those who are by no means sympathetic with his views. It was felt to be a benign and reverent utterance which just missed reaching the Christian position; and apparently it stopped the mouths of not a few evangelical lions who became reluctant to devour a philosopher so near to the Kingdom. But just missing the Christian position is nevertheless missing it. A man who swam the Mississippi to within ten feet of the opposite shore and then sank might be admired for the distance he had traveled and the form he had displayed; but he would still be what Mr. Mantalini called a "dem'd, moist, unpleasant body."

Oh, the little more, and how much it is!  
And the little less, and what worlds away!

Professor Dewey's total philosophy cannot be crowded into a few paragraphs; but the impression which it has made on those who, without thoroughly mastering the entire body of his instruction, have responded to its basic drive, can be fairly suggested in a very condensed form. Religion, according to Professor Dewey, is merely a social tradition. It is the product of desire. It has value only as an emotion making us sensitive to life around us. It has no genuine reality like that of the facts of science. It is not, like matters of science, a fact of experience. The only realities are the facts of sense experience. Progress consists in the satisfaction of material wants, the first requisite toward which is discontent with material conditions. Anything, therefore, which retards or dulls the edge of discontent with material conditions is an obstacle to progress and must be false. Religion, with its hori-

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zons in the spiritual and eternal, retards discontent with material conditions and therefore must be false.

Back of his conception of religion is Professor Dewey's philosophy that the function of ideas is to control environment and that the test of the truth of ideas is simply whether or not they work. They are instruments with which to direct desired changes in the social situation. In every such situation we are to discover the forces that lead to change and are then to select those forces which will lead to the change we want; but there is no objective, authoritative good by which to govern our desires. Progress is measurable only by the satisfaction of physical wants. Paul Elmer More, speaking on the Bross Foundation, epitomized Professor Dewey's position by saying:

Buddha, Plato, Jesus, and other masters and doctors of the life unseen were merely juggling with words and leading us nowhere; the discipline of character proposed by them and their offers of supernatural peace were a fraudulent perversion of the facts of human experience. The only true knowledge is that which comes to the farmer toiling at his crops, and to the carpenter laboring with his tools; the real facts of life are those that we can see and smell and taste and handle.<sup>6</sup>

So Paul Elmer More expounds Professor Dewey! The ideas which will lead to the sense experience you want are true, and the struggle to achieve that experience is progress.

Of course such a brief and superficial statement of Professor Dewey's position does injustice to it; but the very injustice indicates how easily, almost inevitably, his teaching would be and has been interpreted by undisciplined minds into what the Christian Fathers called antinomianism. As another teacher of philosophy put it, "Professor Dewey abandons God for the sake of Democracy."

This is not as magnificent as Machiavelli's unmoral politics calling with the grand accent of the Renaissance through the chancellories of the world. It is not as spectacular and gro-

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tesque as Nietzsche's egotism ranting over Europe about supermen and a superrace. It is not as entertaining or lucid as Hardy's bleak romances and the realism of his successors. But it is very attractive to minds both uncertain of themselves and ignorant of their own uncertainty who, accordingly, are impatient of conventional restraints of thought and conduct. It may be only an arresting coincidence, but it is at least of curious interest that during the generation in which Professor Dewey's influence has dominated the public-school teachers of America, juvenile crimes of passion and violence have increased, with their disclosures of moral insensitiveness. Thoughtful young people are reported to consider sex experience to be no more than a natural function without moral significance; and large numbers of college and university graduates regard religion as a defense mechanism which has survived the conditions of primitive society which evoked it. Older and more rigid moral restraints, older and more positive moral standards, have undoubtedly relaxed, not without consequences in the texture and conduct of society.

There may be differences of opinion as to the extent to which the influences discussed in this chapter have obtained in contemporary life, but that they have obtained is hardly open to denial. The roar of battle, the cries of dying men and nations, may have been of first importance in recent years; but it is these ideas which have set in motion the monstrous men and evils that launched the battles and evoked the cries. No victory of arms, no treaty following it, no academic criticism of former statesmanship or academic proposals of social reform, no blueprints of Utopia, rehabilitation of ruined peoples, and dismemberment of bandit nations will guarantee the world against the recurrence of ruthless ambitions and organized savagery. Only the emancipation of the minds of men from the philosophies which issue in ruthless ambitions and organized savagery can give that guarantee.

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That emancipation will not be accomplished by conferences from Malvern to Delaware nor by the platform omniscience of earnest prophets who regard familiarity with the Beatitudes more effective in statesmanship than knowledge of the facts. It will not be accomplished by Town Hall discussions by patriotic idealists with a Christian spirit and what Charles Lamb would call the comfortable possession of their ignorance. It will be as competent intelligences in the more popular press, and particularly in Christian pulpits, refute the philosophies which have trained the mind of a generation in totalitarian ideals and the ethics of the abattoir and brothel.

Year after year the influence of these philosophies has been registered in the increasing secularism of popular interests, the practical atheism of literature, and the exclusion from education of any serious concern with the claims of religion. And religion, in the Protestant churches of America, has been directing its energies for the most part into the promotion of economic theories and industrial reform, the promulgation of an incoherent pacifism, and the elaboration of ritual in services of public worship. To review those activities will make evident that, expedient and profitable as they may be, postwar and present-day religion *alike* have greater things to do.

### III. TACTICS, NOT STRATEGY

THE MENTION, AT THE CLOSE OF THE PRECEDING CHAPTER, of three activities into which religion has been largely directing its energies brings us back to the discrimination between tactics and strategy. The social gospel, pacifism, and the development of appropriate ritual are in themselves useful and commendable enterprises. Here and there they have achieved for religion some measure of success, have registered some gains for it in limited areas of interest. The social gospel has been a vital, recently emphasized element in the Christian evangel; pacifism is prophetic of a goal ultimately to be reached; and the development of ritual, notwithstanding the incongruities and elaborate bad taste very frequently displayed, reflects and releases an instinct for beauty which genuine worship evokes. But they have been largely unrelated to the basic objective of Christianity, its universal aim; they have not been directed with reference to the entire theater of operations of historic and contemporary Christianity. They have evoked and evinced intelligence, courage, and devotion; but they have contributed little if anything to an effective concentration of the forces of religion or to their disposition and deployment at the point where the campaign must be won.

The development of what is called the social passion among the clergy, which has taken place within a generation, is one of the genuine achievements of contemporary religion. It is a matter of vital conviction among ministers of all ages, all standards of education, all pulpit ranks, and all theological predilections. Preachers in rural parishes are steeped in

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the more radical economic clichés and vehemently assail a capitalism of which both they and their congregations know only by fugitive literature and hearsay; while pastors of urban congregations, in which here and there an economic royalist attempts to worship God, challenge and frequently dismay them with acid criticism of their ethical habits and with crusades in support of proletarian philosophies and aims. That these pulpit utterances, rural and urban alike, are frequently allergic to many of the facts involved and restrained in the thought necessary for a correct interpretation of the facts, does not impede the enthusiasm of the pulpits nor the dismay of the pews. And neither congregations nor preachers have always exhibited the respect for contrary opinions which Christian consecration presupposes. Men have lost their pulpits for preaching the social gospel, as men lost their pulpits ninety years ago for protesting against slavery. Churches, the majority of whose officers and members sustained their preachers' freedom of speech, have suffered loss of income by reason of the withdrawal of influential men of good will and Christian conduct, offended by the immoderacy of their pulpit utterances.

Here is a message and movement, born of Christian conviction, loyal to the New Testament, and sustained by great personal devotion which cannot be ignored or denied and within its proper dimensions cannot be discredited. Nevertheless, as Charles Clayton Morrison convincingly argued in his Rauschenbusch Lectures as long ago as 1932, it is an arrested movement. It has failed "to make any significant progress among the laity,"<sup>1</sup> so he adds, although that now seems by no means true. The theological seminaries have accepted the cogency of the social gospel and have made it a prominent, if not the dominant, influence in their training of the ministry; but the Church, Dr. Morrison said, "is not organized to do what the social-minded minister conceives to be his highest function."<sup>2</sup>

No one seriously concerned for a domestic or international

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order of justice, stability, and peace will wish for any relaxation of the emphasis upon the social gospel, any compromise of the pulpit's demand that Christianity register factually and practically in the social experiences and relationships of life—government, industry, business, diplomacy. One could wish, however, for the display of much wider knowledge and fewer generalizations which have long since lost their appearance of wisdom.

Advocates of the social gospel have too constantly proclaimed it as though it were the complete and inclusive Christian message, declaring for the destruction of capitalism as though it were a species of felony and giving the impression that the Kingdom of God is a synonym for collective bargaining, free trade, and the abolition of profit. This concentration of pulpit interest upon economic and legislative technic as the major expression of the evangel can hardly be justified by an appeal to the New Testament. The primitive Christian society held all things in common, as the more naïve advocates of the social gospel repeat, but the New Testament's fatal comment on the episode is registered in its candid report that Paul carried the charity of the gentile churches to the saints at Jerusalem, whose spontaneous and buoyant communism had evidently come to an embarrassing, if logical, consummation.

The fact is that the New Testament reports the Christians of its time as called to be saints without waiting for any such reconstruction of society as the Methodist Federation for Social Service would approve. Nowhere does it so much as suggest any approximation to the bureaucratic Arcadia suggested from time to time by the most eminent of the social experts among the seats of the flighty. This does not make the demands of the social gospel any less admirable or legitimate, for there is a principle of development registering in humanitarian expressions of Christianity as well as that which Newman recognized in its doctrines. But the history of the first two centuries of our era exhibits an ample and



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victorious Christianity among the most disadvantaged populations of the Roman Empire. It is Christianity, of course, which has contributed most effectively to the disappearance of social disadvantages, a contribution which the social gospel quite properly seeks to make constant and universal. Yet in doing so it has too generally ignored the essentials which made possible saints in Caesar's household and bound Philemon, Paul, and Onesimus into a common brotherhood.

No conduct of society or its institutions will long be considered Christian which does not afford opportunity for all to procure adequate food, clothing, shelter, and education in return for whatever industry and intelligence they are able and willing to devote to productive enterprise. No society will long be considered Christian in which in any fashion human welfare is subordinated to material gain. No conduct of religion will long be considered Christian which does not include in the social ideals toward which it seeks to inspire and commit men the removal of the accidental inequalities which now divide class and class, man and man, and which have no justification in human nature or experience. Upon such truth the social gospel has laid invaluable emphasis, giving a reality to Christianity of which the older generations were not aware.

But the social gospelers have laid that emphasis to the exclusion of almost everything else and often to the betrayal of Christianity. Dr. J. H. Jowett's famous criticism when the social gospel was new is hopelessly dated but is haunted with an inescapable truth. "Men may become so absorbed in social wrongs as to miss the deeper malady of personal sin. They may lift the rod of oppression and leave the burden of guilt." Obsolete language, of course, for sin belongs back yonder with horse cars and kerosene lamps. The word sounds like the echo of receding voices dying out in fading and forgotten days. In its place we have frustrations of natural but good instincts, psychological maladjustments due to misdirected education or imperfectly co-ordinated social re-

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lationships. The publican today could not offer that prayer which Jesus approved, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The Pharisee in the temple would remind him of the social and economic forces of a capitalistic civilization, and the best he could ask now would be that God should so remotivate the activities of the advantaged groups that the social order should contribute to the reintegration of his disrupted personality. As for guilt, that is just a curious feeling resulting from unsatisfactory glandular processes which were disturbed when you were frightened by a bat in the bedroom and dreamed of a grizzly bear!

The betrayal of men and religion by the limited content of the social gospel registers in a less disputed and mysterious area of life. Democracy, as Harold Begbie wrote, has been "placing its faith more and more in the power of wages to buy happiness, turning away with more and more impatience from the divine truth that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us."<sup>3</sup> Certainly the results of the social gospel to date in the evocation and maintenance of loyalties to the Church have been disappointing. After a generation during which the Protestant pulpits of America have increasingly directed their utterances and advertised their sympathies toward social and industrial reform, the Protestant churches apparently have less influence than before on legislation, the character of amusements, social standards, and education. And their especial concern for, and co-operation with, organized labor have brought from labor itself no recognizable increase in its regard either for them or for the spiritual ideals they exalt.

It is this exorbitant belief in middle-class comforts—and in what money can buy—that has persistently betrayed the working classes themselves in their efforts to challenge the existing holders of power and improve their position. They did not ask for justice and freedom; they did not ask for responsible copartnership; they asked, in the main, for just a little more of the gravy.<sup>4</sup>

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This is perhaps the more perplexing—or is it?—when one remembers the blindness of the advocates of the social gospel to the sins of labor. Socially minded pulpit and platform reformers have been eloquent with apostolic boldness in denouncing the sins of capital, the wrongs wrought by management upon labor, and the wickedness of the profit motive in the pursuit of which the employing few have grown rich at the expense of the employed many. But as to the wrongs which labor has wrought upon labor the social gospellers have been as silent as the still night. The payments, always unjustifiable, in practice often almost criminally exorbitant, which labor unions have demanded from union members before permitting them to work in war production and other government enterprises, have occasioned editorial criticism but have been unremarked by prophets of the social gospel, whose indignation at the sins of employers is constantly vocal. The violated agreement of a shop management releases a flood of pulpit and platform protest against the oppression of labor; but broken contracts, strikes in necessary industries caused not by discontent with hours or wages or conditions but by quarrels among labor groups themselves, have occasioned little or no comment from the clergy of the social gospel. The exploitation of labor-union members by their own high-salaried officers through tyrannies inherent in labor organizations have been uncriticized. The spectacle of union officials appropriating for their private use great sums of union money, indulging in millionaires' sports and luxuries and extravagances at the expense of union members living from hand to mouth, the maintenance in union offices of men with criminal records and even contemporary crimes, has not aroused enough indignation in the prophets of the social gospel to reach the public ear. Society does not want its pulpits and religious press to remind it of Westbrook Pegler, but it wonders why the social gospel so persistently averts its eyes from the facts which Westbrook Pegler and all other interested spectators recognize in the world of industry.

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Labor itself has not rewarded this tender consideration with any reciprocal regard. It is as aloof from the Church, as hostile in some quarters, as disinterested by and large, as it ever was, if not more than ever. Largely, perhaps, because the social gospel by its exclusive presentation of its particular interest has allowed the essential message and claim of religion to fade from men's minds. What from time to time is proclaimed as a tribute to the social gospel is frequently a witness to its tragic failure. From time to time a labor leader is quoted to the effect that, having seen a clergyman or some local church in action or having read some church's social creed, he is for the Church. In its joy over the spectacle of such a more-or-less eminent sinner's returning to the fold, the witnessing pulpit generally overlooks the fact that the eminent does not regard himself as a sinner and has not returned to any fold; he is of the opinion that the fold has returned to him. The significance of the Church is not that it has made moral demands upon him or wakened him to the recognition of moral realities and reinforcements or made real his sense of obligation to God but that it will co-operate with him in procuring higher wages and shorter hours. Labor's interest in the Church seems to end at the point where the Church's fundamental mission to the world begins, its development of moral responsibility and its demand upon personal character.

If the progress of the social gospel has been arrested among the laymen of the Church—which is probably open to question—it is not wholly due, as is charged, to the opposition of capitalistic-minded laymen to the democratization of industry or to collective bargaining or to labor's sharing justly in the proceeds of the industry. There is, of course, opposition to labor's proportionate share in the profits of industry while it refuses to share in the losses. There is opposition to labor's participation in responsibilities of management while it refuses to incorporate its organizations and thus make possible the fixing of responsibility. But there has been a genuine, if

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partial, acceptance of the premises of the social gospel and a genuine desire on the part of ownership and management to co-operate with labor in the elimination of injustices and the establishment of a permanent technic, mutually satisfactory, for the adjustment of differences. And few interested third parties have found representatives of capital more obstinately opposed to industrial reform and less amenable to reasonable readjustments than representatives of labor. As the Archbishop of Canterbury has written, they find "that it is exactly as difficult to overcome the vested interests of Labour organizations, and those who gain a living by working them, as it is to overcome the capitalist vested interest which Labour rightly denounces." <sup>5</sup>

Business men and professional men associated with business enterprises are less hospitable than men in the ranks of labor to the preaching of the social gospel largely because too many of its spokesmen not only voice their conception of its aims and imperatives but also undertake to prescribe the business and professional technics by which those aims and imperatives are to be achieved. Business and professional men are not blind to the validity of the social ideal, but they are also familiar with the practical difficulties in the way of its immediate accomplishment; and the ready-made methods of industrial and administrative procedure frequently prescribed by spokesmen of the social gospel ignore the practical and stubborn obstacles with which such men are quite familiar. The stereotyped inadequacy of the technics proposed by preachers and professors unacquainted with facts to be learned only by working experience, raises a suspicion as to the trustworthiness of the entire social message with which amateurs on the side lines belabor them. The *status quo* looks to be the easier way.

The defect of the social gospel as a religious enterprise, evidenced by its effects upon industrial society, is that while it has delivered men from some of the evils of society, it has not saved them from themselves. It has striven for their phys-

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ical comfort but has not secured their consecration to higher than physical ideals. It has helped to make them more secure but has left them still as selfish. It has been attempting to extend Christianity without making men Christian. Instead of the destiny which the New Testament proposes as the end of life, it has prescribed a destination along the way.

When, therefore, the minister comes from the theological seminary to his parish or rises from a reading of an inspiring report of some social service committee with the conception that his highest function is to proclaim and apply the social gospel, it is not impossible that he is entertaining a misconception. Important as the social gospel is, it is not the total message of the New Testament. This in no way denies or even disputes the intrinsic importance and legitimacy of the social gospel. It simply denies that the reform of social conditions, the reordering of industrial relations, and the exhibition of industry and economics as the field in which the demands of Christianity must *first* be met, constitute the highest function of the ministry. They are important; they are parts of the enterprise to which the minister is commissioned. But there is nothing exclusively Christian or religious in them. Men ought to promote social justice, they ought to open democratic opportunities to the disadvantaged, they ought to forward the great social philanthropies and industrial reforms which the social gospel emphasizes, not because they are Christian, but because they are human. One does not need to have religion in order to recognize injustice and social wrong; all he needs is good judgment. One does not need religion in order to be obligated to social service; all he needs is good sense. All the social action urged by the social gospel is a Christian's duty, not because he is a Christian, but because he is a man. When the Church concentrates its message and imperatives upon them, it is engaged in tactics, not strategy. It is carrying out troop movements which are justified only as they are subordinate to, and in pursuance of, the clearly defined strategy of the total campaign.

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The remarkable development of pacifist sentiment during the generation just past—at once the most idealistic and, in the state of mind it has tended to produce, the most dangerous of contemporary moods—belongs also to the realm of tactics and not of strategy. It has been almost wholly the work of Christian pulpits, supported by allies in the colleges and universities; and the criticism registered in this chapter implies no failure to recognize the desirability of the aims of pacifism or the sincerity of its proponents. They have made a genuine contribution, not only to the ideal of world peace, but to the efforts of men to achieve it. They have vitalized into an inescapable challenge, alike to citizenship and diplomacy, an idea which has been floating vaguely in the thought of the world since the Napoleonic wars. They have established it in the agenda of both religious and secular conferences, have given it a growing literature, and have won for it official, although antagonistic, recognition by both civil and military authorities.

President Wilson, almost a quarter of a century ago, declared that “within another generation there will be another world war if the nations of the world do not concert the method by which to prevent it”; and his judgment has been terribly vindicated. At the time, his was a voice which, if not solitary, was at least without many echoes. There were practically no occupants of the seats of the mighty in the Western world who concurred, while “brave men and worthy patriots, dear to God,” thought they had uttered the ultimate political and social philosophy when they said that you can’t change human nature.

It is significant today that it is no longer only a statesman here and there immersed in international events and menaces, or an antiquated oldster hanging like another last leaf upon the tree of pacifism which Eugene V. Debs planted in the soil of labor, who knows the necessity for a concert of the nations to prevent war. The common people of the world know it, and know that it presupposes the elimination of the causes

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of war. It is the pacifists, far more than has been realized perhaps, who have accelerated the growth of that conviction in the average mind. Like the abolitionists of eighty-five years ago, even their extravagant and ill-balanced utterances have illumined wiser and more effective ways to peace than the inconsistencies of their positions permit to be derived from their propaganda.

There is the inconsistency displayed, for instance, in their references to Scripture in support of their thesis. Two quotations seem most frequently to be heard throughout their discussions. From Genesis one hears, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," and from Matthew the words, "Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The weakness of the proof-text method of buttressing an argument can easily be recognized in the difficulties into which it immediately involves the pacifism that employs it. Whether or not the second clause is "an ordinary axiom in law," as very highly respected New Testament scholarship has called it, there seems to be no reason for regarding it as Jesus' unqualified repudiation of war. For an impartial loyalty to Jesus' words will bring one face to face with an equally authoritative utterance of his reported by Luke: "When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. And he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet; and he that hath none, let him sell his cloak, and buy a sword."

Can this admonition reported by Luke be no more than figurative language while the axiom preserved by Matthew is to be taken literally? If so, then history has contradicted Jesus. Bismarck lived pretty much by the sword but spent his last days in honor and ease and comfort and died in peace, eighty-three years old, at Friedrichsruh. St. Helena was exile, but it was as free from swords as from saints; and Napoleon, calling "Tête d'armée" as he died amid a tempest, suffered



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no violence in retribution for his career of bloodshed. Death came to the great professional soldiers of the first World War—Hindenburg, Joffre, Foch, French, Haig—with neither swords nor terror. Abdul Hamid II, whose thirty-three-year reign of murder, massacre, and atrocity won him the illuminating titles of “The Great Assassin,” “The Unspeakable Turk,” and “Abdul the Damned,” spent his last nine years happily amid his dogs and birds and harem making desks for old diplomatic friends; and he died in Moslem peace without the aid of sword or bowstring, such as he had been accustomed to supply so generously to those who were unfortunate enough to have gained his displeasure.

Waive the history, however, and explore the consistency of pacifism’s insistence on the literal meaning of Jesus’ words, the obligation to obey them literally. Its disciples reinforce their argument with Jesus’ direct command, “Resist not him that is evil”; and Gandhi has invoked the words in promoting his adjustable policy of passive resistance. But neither Gandhi nor American pacifists have been observed obeying the words of Jesus which immediately precede them: “If thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. . . . And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee.” Is the inference to be that they have never yielded to the lust of the eye or the sin of action?

There has been confusion in utterances of eminent pacifists having unusual influence over the decisions of young men who accept pacifist doctrine with little questioning because of the character and religious profession of their instructors. Frequently these young men have suffered for holding the opinions which their teachers disseminate in safety. One of the most sincere and esteemed of contemporary pacifists, addressing a college audience in 1940, said:

There are things worth fighting for—truth, liberty, love, justice, the preservation of human life. But the things worth fighting

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for are the things we destroy when we try to preserve them by mass destruction. As we cannot gather grapes from thistles or figs from thorns, so we cannot gather truth from organized deception, liberty from dictatorship, justice from annihilation, love from hate, life from wholesale slaughter.

If it had been said only in a platform utterance, it might be considered as a not unusual lapse in extemporaneous speech. Being preserved in a published address, it becomes a thoroughgoing illustration of confusion of ideas and irrelevance of language. The sentences which precede it are relevant but make for conviction to the degree in which they are not intelligently scrutinized.

When was truth "destroyed" by fighting to make lies unprofitable in international affairs? As the Allied Nations overthrow Nazi Germany with its erection of falsehood into a technic, not only of international communication, but of government and education as well, what truth is destroyed? What truth *can* be destroyed? With the German armies of occupation driven from the countries they have crushed and crucified, with those tortured populations freed from the Gestapo, what liberty is destroyed? With the Nazi terror swept away by the defeat of German armies, fleets, and submarines, with haunting fear and the horror of concentration camps and firing squads lifted, not only from the lands the Germans have overrun, but from Germany itself, what justice is destroyed? Or would justice have been better served if England and the United States had watched with detached and pacifist unconcern the enslavement and the slaughter of a continent? The pacifist has overlooked the fact, to which history bears incontrovertible witness, that unless armed injustice, employing ruthless force, is defeated by the only technic in which it recognizes defeat, that is, by superior force, justice itself will not survive. Pacifism's basic fallacy is its tacit assumption that all men recognize the same standards of value, are animated by the same good will, desire the same

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moral ends. But to rely upon moral ideals and the appeal of the common good for the establishment of righteousness against the violence and cunning of men whose social philosophy begins in a repudiation of righteousness and whose ideal of humanity is "a violently active, dominating, intrepid, brutal youth" in whose eyes is "the gleam of pride and independence of the beast of prey," is no more intelligent a procedure than an attempt to tame Gargantua by singing "Home, Sweet Home."

A democracy's prosecution of war certainly necessitates a temporary abridgment of personal and even social rights that are held to be inviolate in times of peace. But this constitutes no evidence of wickedness in war. Marriage involves not temporary but permanent abridgment of rights inseparable from detached individual personality. This may occasion something of inconvenience, even irritation, to the contracted parties; but it is no valid argument against the desirability of marriage. When a democracy is compelled to defend itself by force, efficiency in war requires regimentation to the one enterprise. But regimentation to the common enterprise, ordered by a democracy through democratic processes, does not become dictatorship unless democracy loses the will or the power to discard the regimentation when the emergency has passed.

This confusion is not confined to chairs of theology; it is more disastrous and less pardonable in some practical results. More than one man eminent for his genuine contributions to intelligent and humane life, whose character and counsel have led college students into camps and imprisonment as conscientious objectors, has illustrated this same inconsistency. More than one such man said, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, that he was still a pacifist, that he would not support the war but of course would pay his taxes. Yet the only way in which most such men can support the war is by paying taxes; the only way they can avoid supporting the war without unpleasant consequences to

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themselves is by refusing to pay taxes. No pacifist has yet been reported as refusing to pay his taxes because of the proportion of them devoted to war. They have thus avoided the consequences in which susceptible and conscientious young men have involved themselves by courageously following their counsel. These older men have been wise and no less sincere in their decision. No good purpose would be served by their withholding taxes and incurring punishment. The facts do not indict their character; they evidence the confusion in which pacifism up to the present has inevitably been involved.

There has been confusion in not a few minds, not necessarily pacifist but in support of pacifism, concerning the character of Christianity in the light of the war. A striking and, within limited constituencies, not unpopular pulpit utterance heard in several quarters in 1942 was that "we would better lose the war and save Christianity than win the war and lose Christianity." But the remark is inane unless it represents the speaker's sincere conviction as to the nature of Christianity, in which case it is tragic. A Christianity that is saving itself is already lost. Christianity is in no need of being saved; at least no one on earth has any responsibility for saving it. Our only responsibility is for living it. Its saving is in those strong hands that "lifted empires from their hinges and turned the stream of history into new channels." The Church and its leadership have to save men—not alone in the limited personal experience sought by the older evangelism, but including also the rights of life, the securities in which the higher life develops, the imponderables of freedom, fellowship, ideals, and personality. These have been viciously destroyed in little nations where fellow Christians have been outnumbered, outbombed, outgunned, and have gone down in slavery and death before a "New Order" of men erecting atheism and lust into principles of government and boasting their barbarity as the seal of a superior race. Any Christianity, the disciples of which would

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"save" it by leaving their fellow men to such a fate, would not be worth saving.

No discussion of pacifism, however incomplete, dares omit all reference to Gandhi, whose name is much on the lips of pacifists particularly of these who have remained happily ignorant of the "baffling contradictions of Gandhi, the man, Gandhi, the saint, and Gandhi, the astute political leader, . . . the bewildering mixture of a mediaeval religious mystic and a superb political opportunist." <sup>6</sup> A conscientious objector, so conscientious that he would not even register under the Selective Service Act, in a statement made to the judge presiding at the time of his conviction, said, "We must use all good means such as the nonviolent resistance of Christ and Gandhi, to obtain a good end." But it was Gandhi who said, "I would rather see India freed by violence than enchained like a slave to her foreign oppressors." <sup>7</sup> Gandhi has declared his desire to "banish the stigma of 'untouchability' from the 'depressed classes' but has steadfastly opposed any effort to alter the Hindu cast system; he wishes merely to make the 'Untouchables' a new fifth caste." <sup>8</sup> Perhaps entire consistency should not be asked of a mystic who has soberly declared that "a religion which establishes the worship of the cow cannot possibly countenance a cruel or inhuman boycott of human beings," while his Hinduism relentlessly maintains the caste system. This citation of one of his numerous references to the worship of the cow recalls his statement that he considers it "one of the most wonderful phenomena in all human evolution." <sup>9</sup> Curious as such utterances sound to Western ears, they do not necessarily discredit his sincerity or deny him whatever saintliness his disciples ascribe to him. They do indicate rather positively that, in the light of twentieth-century knowledge, his intellectual processes are not trustworthy. To associate so contradictory a mind with the unwavering consistency of Christ, to parallel in moral authority the direct, invariable certitudes of Christ with the affirmations of a political leader whose disciples have been

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repeatedly embarrassed and confused by his vacillations and love of compromise, does not commend more favorably the pacifism he is presumed to incarnate. It is thoroughgoing, however, in its application to the United Nations. "Imagine the state of Europe today if the Czechs, Poles, Norwegians, the French and the English had all said to Hitler: We will meet your violence with non-violence; you will therefore be able to destroy our non-violent army without tanks, battle-ships and airships."<sup>10</sup> He imagines such a state of Europe with satisfaction, but it is just because we also imagine such a state that most of us have been all out for a military victory that shall make any repetition of Nazism impossible. We do not need to imagine it, however; we can see it in what was Austria, in the condition of Italy under the German heel, in what was Czechoslovakia, and in the civilian population of Germany itself outside of the Nazi party.

Gandhi has said that he "would rather see India freed by violence than enchained like a slave to her foreign oppressors," but he would rather see Europe enslaved without resistance than freed by violence. "The Chinese," he said, "made the mistake of fighting. . . . Had they not opposed the Japanese, had they stood by, neither raising their arms nor destroying their crops, had they simply refrained from co-operation with the Japanese, then the Japanese would have been defeated."<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, neither they nor the Chinese would have known it, and the Japanese would have moved forward on an accelerated schedule to the next item in the Tanaka Memorial.

In 1940 the medieval saint wrote an appeal to the English:

I appeal to every Briton . . . to lay down your arms as being useless for saving you or humanity. You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want. . . . Let them take possession of your beautiful island. . . . If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them.<sup>12</sup>

England—which, with all the injustice and exploitation that

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may be charged against her in India, has there a record also of schools, sanitation, improvement of health, preservation of peace among hostile races and faiths, to put beside the Nazi entail of crime and horror in Europe—must be driven out of India, by violence if need be. Gandhi does not invite England to take possession of India; nor, when Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini found themselves on the receiving end of the war and no longer the triumphant invaders, did Gandhi appeal to them to lay down their arms and allow the English and Russians and Americans to take what they want. The world, according to Gandhi, should “know of the bravery of the French statesmen in suing for peace.”<sup>13</sup> Up with Judas! Hurrah for Benedict Arnold! Praise the Lord and pass the Quislings!

This is Gandhi, but it is not Christ. No one knows enough to say that Christ would not be a pacifist, though one may assume that if he were a pacifist he would have more logical and coherent reasons than his contemporary disciples have usually advanced for their pacifist faith. But the most casual acquaintance with his life and character as reported in the Gospels enables one to say that the Christ who died for his ideals, after not only a verbal but a violent demonstration against those who desecrated religion and despoiled the poor, would not watch the bestializing of the minds of German children, the starvation of Greek and Pole and Dutch, the victims of prison camp and prison torture, of massacre and rape, and think that his refusal to rescue them by the use of force was a singular proof of his loyalty to God. Jesus went to the Cross that other people might be saved to an abundant life; he did not indulge, in detached safety, high moral sentiments while watching other people being crucified.

The essential defect of the average contemporary pacifist is not in his character but in his logic. One can take for granted his devotion to democracy, for he claims rights which only democracy affords, even while refusing to co-

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operate in the application of force, by which alone democracy won its opportunity in the past and can now sustain itself against the assaults of the dictators. For the truth is that if the pacifist is to be protected in his right of refusing to co-operate in the defense of democracy by force, democracy must nevertheless exercise whatever force may be necessary to enable it to survive. He lives in a world in which democracy survives only by the constant possession and the occasional exercise of force, and disregards the conditions and repudiates the efforts which alone make both democracy and himself possible. For "to give fascism all the quick benefits of coercion and to hold for democracy all the disabilities of persuasion is to commit suicide."<sup>14</sup> In recent years he has seen voluntary, determined, heavily armed and utterly unscrupulous evil ruthlessly destroying nations and races, the inheritances of civilization and the social achievements of Christian faith. The alternatives before him are the use of force to end Nazism and its crimes or the rejection of force and the creation of a Nazi world with its *Herren*-class, its eternally disfranchised and enslaved, its youth with the gleam of a beast of prey in its eyes; and he chooses the latter. Once again we have known "good patriots who for a theory risked a cause."

But has he not ample justification because of moral imperatives transcending all the claims of political expediency and even of personal security? War, to the thoroughgoing pacifist, as many a young conscientious objector has affirmed, is murder, no less a sin against God and man because it is murder in the mass; and what else can he do but refuse to have part in it? Shall not his refusal, with the penitentiary or the prison camp as the end of his refusal, be honored as a heroism of the spirit? It is a fair question; but what retards agreement in such appraisal is the willingness of conscientious objectors to perform any noncombat duty to which they may be assigned, thus permitting other men with less sensitive consciences to enter the armed service as combat troops.



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They dare not permit themselves to participate in war, which is murder; but they release, with untroubled souls, other men to commit the murder which they dare not undertake. Have they not heard of accessories to the crime? Recognizing the differences in language and technic, one wishes they did not present such singular spiritual similarities to those cautious inhabitants of the underworld whose moral stature will not permit them to rob a bank or commit a homicide, but whose discriminating conscience allows them to drive the car in which the yeggmen arrive at the bank and later escape with the plunder after the watchman has been shot.

The preceding pages do not record any question as to the sincerity, courage, or idealism of pacifists. They do take issue with the illogic of pacifism's position and some of its contemporary demonstrations. Nevertheless, the point of concern in the chapter and in this volume is with the fact that the preaching and promotion of pacifism, logical and illogical alike, are but minor and inadequate maneuvers in the grand campaign in which Christianity and the Church are critically engaged. They are tactics, generally premature, sometimes quite irrelevant to the execution of the vital strategy.

The development of ritual in what have been nonritualistic churches has been a prominent and attractive feature of American Protestantism during the past generation. The result in many churches is a dignity and beauty in services of worship which they lacked before, and in which many congregations have found satisfaction.

The development began with architects and church boards of architecture that set out boldly to deliver American Protestantism from building committees and builders who were filling the landscape with churches that ranged in design from the structural motif of a freight car to architectural combinations of the Hippodrome and the House of the Seven Gables. Many such buildings still remain—little blas-

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phemies in brick and wood, immense monstrosities in tormented stone—but throughout the country there is an increasing number of beautiful sanctuaries, large and small, built or rebuilt within a quarter of a century, in which architecture has invited ritual to unite with accessories in the atmosphere of devotion.

It is quite proper to ask, however, whether this beauty, these accessories, and this atmosphere of devotion may not have been recovered at too great a cost. That they were often lacking and are now desirable admits of no argument; that they might have been recovered with unqualified intellectual and spiritual profit can hardly be denied; but that up to the present this development of ritual in nonritualistic churches has been unaccompanied by serious loss is open to grave question.

Architecture in vital connection with religion expresses its character and spirit. One can worship, on occasion, in surroundings having no connection with religion except by the accident of physical occupation by the worshipers, when the intensity of thought or emotion prevents any feeling of incongruity or incompleteness; a rude cabin on the frontier, an exceptional service on shipboard, a campfire gathering in the hushed and solemn twilight of the mountains or beside the sea. But when worship is habitually in discordant environments, such as a country schoolhouse or a vacant storeroom in a city, the impoverishment is inescapable and is not diminished by the worshipers' unfamiliarity with any other places of devotion.

The story of religious architecture cannot be told in a few pages, and little of it needs be told at all. It is sufficient for the present purpose to recall that as religious ideas and conceptions variously developed in the past, the changing architecture of places of worship reflected the spirit and character of the religion which was sheltered by it. Jesus, moving with his disciples through a region of Greek cities, Roman structures, Hebrew synagogues, gave his followers no

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forms of public worship and no directions for religious organization. Christianity, for the first Christians, became a fellowship of those who, slaves, soldiers, converted rabbis, and whatever else they might be, recognized Jesus as the living Lord, were conscious of vital relationship through him with God, and were living as best they could in purity of personal life and in expectation of the Lord's return. An upper room, a home, a loft, or in time of persecution a cemetery or a cave, would serve their simple, spontaneous exercises of prayer and praise. Gothic architecture evolved when, centuries later, the unregimented fellowship of primitive Christians had become the Roman Church and the simple "teaching and fellowship, . . . the breaking of bread and the prayers" had long since given way to the miracle of the Mass. In that architecture not the Christian "way" of the Book of Acts but "the mysticism of the Middle Ages, their vague but potent feelings of infinity, their yearnings towards a Deity invisible, but localized in holy things and places, found artistic outlet."

Within the sanctuary the center of concern, the supreme interest of clergy and people alike, was the altar at which the priest performed that miracle of the Mass. Without it and the priestly absolution made possible by it, the worshiper was hopeless of salvation. The Gothic interior, with the high altar in the east, was designed for the magnificence of a spectacle, not for the intelligibility of an utterance. The congregation, for the most part illiterate, would have profited little from the spoken word. It could have grasped no more than the shallowest exposition of theology. It could have given no subjective reason for its faith. Its religion was the surrender of its faith and judgment to the Church itself, and the Church fitted its message to the congregation's capacity. Few of even the eminent members of the congregation could understand the language of the ritual. But all could see the altar and the gorgeous costumes of the clergy in their genuflections. They could watch the swinging censor

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and the smoke of incense. They could hear the bell bespeak the presence of God. It was all beyond their comprehension, but it was visible before them, and the very mystery of it as well as the magnificence gave the Church more power over their lives. Very naturally the pulpit was put to the side and the altar at the center so that the congregation might have unobstructed sight of the pageantry of the great sacrifice.

When protests against certain practices of the church culminated in the Reformation and the Reformers turned from the traditional church to the New Testament as the seat of authority in religion, they rediscovered its witness that the sacrifice of Christ was not a recurring mystery at the will of the priest but a finished deed. They recovered the New Testament's emphasis upon the "offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," and upon the time "when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever." The approach to God, they inferred and declared, requires no altar, no interposition of priest or other mediator, but is open to every soul through the revealed and revealing Word. Accordingly, in meeting-house and chapel, the center of interest was the Bible, and the clergyman was not a priest reproducing the sacrifice of God for man but a prophet interpreting the word of God to man. The chapels of the dissenting bodies in the British Isles, the New England meetinghouses, the boxlike structures of rural Methodism, the "tabernacles" of revivalism and summer resorts, repellent as their barrenness has been to the more acutely aesthetic Christians, with their central pulpit and open Bible have maintained, even though unconsciously, the great Protestant theological tradition.

It is no defense of the return to Gothic to reply that the congregations worshiping amid it do not realize its contradiction of their theology. By as much as that is true they are equally unaware of the significance of the symbolism they have adopted, which is no slight condemnation of the clergy that has so failed in its fundamental obligation. For, as Dr. John A. Mackay has said, "theology, great theology is our

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chief contemporary need." The concentration of the Protestant clergy upon the sermon and the liturgical barrenness which for the most part accompanied it have been charged with responsibility for the return to ritual and its welcome from the laity, and undoubtedly they deprived Protestantism of much of the value of corporate worship transmitted through a noble and historic ritual. But it has not been the concentration of the clergy upon the sermon that has most impoverished congregations; it has been the economy of thought which many of the sermons have exhibited. "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God";<sup>15</sup> and fundamental is the feeding of the mind with truth, which the sensuous effect of impressive liturgical exercises fails to accomplish. Many a congregation has remarked on the beauty of a service in which it had just participated without recognizing a single challenge to the pursuit of the divine will or the performance of a practical Christian duty.

Then there are the religious aestheticists, who love the twilight and the stars, for whom the core of religion is aesthetic emotion. But as emotion in their case is sought for its own sake and is not transmuted into action, it becomes sentimentality. . . . The new liturgical movement, where it connotes religious faith and inspires the music of a more harmonious life with God and man, has limitless possibilities. But when aesthetics and the purely aesthetic motive control it, the movement constitutes one of the most insidious dangers in our time to true Christian worship.<sup>16</sup>

The consequences of this new development of ritual have gone far beyond the service of public worship in the sanctuary, as can be seen in the flood of printed programs pouring from church presses for the varied and multiplying religious enterprises of contemporary church life. Practically every

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special service of the church year and the services of all the numerous groups within the Church's organized life—church schools, men's clubs, young people's organizations, women's societies—are supplied with programs in complete detail, in which the introductory remarks, every address, scripture passages, quotations stuck in—to use a phrase of Beecher's—"like cloves in a ham," prayers, and benediction are printed in full. Recently, in preparation for a week of special devotion—the object of which was to raise money—the ministers of a great denomination were provided with materials so voluminous and detailed as to include a series of addresses, printed to the last comma and question mark, which chosen laymen were presumed to deliver during the course of the week's program. Regimentation is not wholly confined to other continents or even to the political authorities on this continent. If the trend in the Church goes much further, one may expect in the not-too-distant future a denominational, perhaps ultimately a Protestant, address system through which a bishop or bright young man with a radio voice, in New York or Nashville, will conduct a streamlined service for every church in the land with himself as the only preacher, guaranteeing a beautifully enunciated program, democratically identical for every congregation, with music transcribed. And what a saving in ministers' salaries!

No one can overestimate the value of the great devotional classics: *The Book of Common Prayer*, the *Devotions* of Bishop Andrewes, *The Imitation of Christ*, such a compendium as Fox's *A Chain of Prayer Across the Ages*, and the other noble treasuries of penitence and petition. But one may well be appalled by the torrent of printed prayers now falling over the landscape of imitative and unexercised piety

Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa

and cheapening what was an awesome and humble act of deep religious experience into an indoor sport. No issue

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of a religious journal is conceivable without at least one prayer fresh from the typewriter. A widely distributed commercial advertisement has appeared with a prayer framed in bright colors in the center. No age, occasion, event, idea, spectacle, but is celebrated as soon as possible by a prayer printed in anything from an encyclopedia to a Sunday paper. Saintly and humble-minded men once wrote them for their own use and kept them private to themselves, until after their death discerning friends found the prayers and found in them a vehicle for their own petitions. Now industrious clerics with a turn for phrases—not always good—apparently produce them to order or with a fairly accurate eye for publication dates. It can hardly be long until the eager publicists of piety will give us some such volume as *At Mother's Knee, A Book of Prayers for Little Ones*, specially prepared for the busy young matron. No longer will it be necessary for her to interrupt her evening duties in order to hear the children in their devotions. She will need only remind them of the hour—"It's prayer time, children; get your lovely book"—and the happy little voices will grow hushed in the solemn joy of hunting for the page.

Lytton Strachey, exploring the multitudinous activities with which Florence Nightingale filled her later years, and her self-assurance of the divine collaboration in all that she desired to accomplish, got the impression that if the Almighty were not careful, she would kill him with overwork; and it is hardly irreverent to wonder how, if God reads all the printed prayers now scattered so lavishly before him by the army of enthusiastic worshipers in print, he ever finds time for the other duties of omnipotence.

These activities, indirect derivations from the development of ritual in the nonliturgical churches, promise serious consequences in the spiritual life of the coming generation. There are thousands of young men and women employing these prepared programs, originally "helps" but now pretty much the entire service; reciting the printed rituals; reading

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the addresses and the accompanying prayers, all supplied in full; going through the forms of a mechanically organized religious expression which has cost them nothing of effort, involved nothing of religious experience, brought no stimulus, and awakened no original thought. They remain, accordingly, ignorant of the content of the Christian faith they profess, unfamiliar with the experience it is presumed to interpret, unchallenged by its implications and uncommitted to the moralities it involves and illumines.

Taken as a whole, the ritualistic movement, notwithstanding the contribution it has offered to intelligent devotion and the beauty it has restored to corporate worship, registers, or is in danger of registering, a decadence in spiritual life. "Salvation by ritual is the religion of the natural man, simply because it is the one phase of religious experience that has no necessary connection with morality."<sup>17</sup> A genuinely spiritual church is concerned to declare with positive assurance the truth which it possesses and by which it is possessed rather than to imitate or elaborate the forms through which the past expressed a different experience of reality and faith. But when confidence has ebbed, when truth is conventional and no longer commanding, a church, particularly its clergy, seeks in ancient forms and new embellishments a substitute for the power which once its prophets exercised and its members felt. Confident and vigorous churches have had, and may have, magnificent ritualistic forms; but their forms are such as have been identified with their historic origins and life. The Lutheran and Reformed churches of Europe, the Anglican Church, fresh from Romanism, carried over into their Protestant orders a heritage of ritual which had been their native atmosphere and expression. For the Methodist Church, organized in separation from the Wesleyan societies in the British Isles, John Wesley provided a form of public worship adapted from the Establishment's *Book of Common Prayer*. But in all of these the ritualistic and liturgical forms employed were abridgments in the interest of



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simplicity, not elaborations for ornament or returns to older and more numerous rubrics. "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America," which Wesley provided, did not last very long. Sunday services, as a historian explains, were frequently so numerous as to leave no time for the liturgy. Jesse Lee, who ranks with the greatest of Methodism's creative and heroic spirits, remarks in his history, which was published in 1810, that "some who had long been accustomed to pray extempore were unwilling to adopt this new plan, being fully satisfied that they could pray better and with more devotion while their eyes were shut than they could with their eyes open." This is a testimony to which professional program makers and church editors and publishers may well give thought. It is being confirmed in reverse action by the quality of religious experience resulting from these nominally religious services, in which the participants require, not a sense of spiritual reality and obligation, loyalty and need, but good eyesight and the right quotation. The therapeutics of spiritual as well as medical science recognizes that predigested foods are tacit indications of precarious health or inadequate vitality.

Notwithstanding what has been said in the present chapter in criticism of the elaboration of ritual in nonritualistic churches, the major emphasis is not upon the defects in the movement but upon the fact that, however great may be the merits of the return to ritual, it is a minor enterprise, to which the churches have directed too much of their interest and energy, to the neglect of their genuine responsibility. Like the social gospel and pacifism, it is at best a matter of tactics only which has been carried out for the most part in ignorance or disregard of essential strategy. "The danger," as one of the wisest of our contemporary minds has told us, "is in the fact that there has arisen in our time such a view of the world and of human life as has created the suspicion even among many Christian people, themselves, that perhaps Christianity is after all not true."<sup>18</sup>

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There is another danger, which is that a world that has learned through war and the rationing of the necessities of life how many things it can do without may decide that these subordinate enterprises, which do not depend upon a distinctive endowment of character and do not speak with indisputable and distinctive authority to its profoundest need, may be carried on as well and less expensively by other institutions more amenable to its control. What if the world after the war should decide that the Church's instructional activities can better be exercised by the educational institutions of the state; that its philanthropies should be administered by agencies of society itself; that its social gospel can best be declared and applied through co-operative organizations of industry and government; that its sermons, no longer sharply and solemnly distinguished from the admonition and commentary of the platform and the classroom, can be profitably supplanted by dissertations of its learned institutions or some cultural expansion of an Office of Public Information?

That these collateral and, in due proportion, necessary interests are subordinate to the supreme, distinctive mission of the Church can hardly be denied. The temper of contemporary religious life offers evidence in support. While these interests have been much to the fore in the preaching of a generation or more, there has been increasing negligence, amounting in many pulpits to a total eclipse of the great historic affirmations of faith which constitute the enduring body of the gospel and upon which the Church is founded. Those who were stewards of the mysteries have been succeeded by expositors of the obvious. Servants of the eternal have become spokesmen of the transitory; and churches, unaccustomed to hear or think on noble themes of what Dr. Mackay has called great theology, are no longer edified but are content to be entertained. Dr. H. H. Farmer's judgment is only too accurate, that "it was precisely into the vacuum of unbelief that those beliefs in false gods rushed which

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have now plunged the race into the horror of these times.”<sup>19</sup> But unbelief is an attitude of individual minds before it can be the mood of a race or a generation. The postwar strategy of religion, accordingly, must be directed, not to the creation of sentiment en masse, but to the capture of individual conviction.

## IV. THE MASS OF MANEUVER

THE MASS OF MANEUVER" IS A PHRASE WHICH MEETS US constantly in discussions of military science and the operations of armies in the field. It is descriptive of the number and nature of the armed forces employed in the military action contemplated. Following the analogy, it becomes a convenient figure with which to introduce a consideration of the direction of Protestant energies and purposes in their service to society and the world at large in the immediate future.

Very naturally it is a vivid reminder of the need for union of churches at present so numerous separated. Such union is, of course, a consummation devoutly to be wished; and our increasing recognition of the need is witness to the development of Christian conscience and insight. But the matter is not without complexities which are not always visible upon the surface of what seems to be a very simple undertaking. Church union, too generally considered in terms of uniformity, might result in some disadvantages now obscured by the prominence of the effective power to be gained.

It is easy, and has been popular, to remark the futility of the divisions of Protestantism and to lament the impoverishment of the spiritual life and social experience by reason of their unhappy rivalries; and there have been rivalries concerning which "unhappy" is a feeble word. But a comparison with the life of society in general during the period from the thirteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century will make very clear that, notwithstanding the advantages of unity

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then and the disadvantages involved in the divisions, doctrinal asperities, and divisive fanaticisms since that time, religious life in this latter period has been the more vital and productive. It has been more expansive of the horizons of experience and appreciation, more militant in its invasion of new areas of intellectual and social change, more constant and persuasive in the evangel which captures new truth for the support of ancient faith.

It is religion as maintained and modulated in a divided Protestantism which has faced the inquisitions of modern science and rebuilt its fundamental affirmations amid the debris of crumbling premises and the confusion of revolutionary discoveries. It is Protestantism, virile through the stimulus of its own varied forms, which has wakened the desire and inspired the struggle for democracy, not by repression but by enlargement, and has made increasingly imperative the demand that religion coincide with all the relationships of human life. It is a divided Protestantism, more sympathetic toward practical human needs by reason of its sensitiveness to varying human moods, which has carried religion out of the sanctuary and associated it with the claims of human rights in industry and the clamors of human wrongs born of the inertias and impacts of congested populations and the accumulating mechanisms of society and labor. It is Protestantism, divided, competitive, distracted, which has disclosed Christ in compelling reality to pagan peoples, challenging their culture, disintegrating their philosophy, re-creating their self-respect in new forms of racial pride and protest; and their now imperious demands for rights and freedoms and opportunities of which heretofore they have been deprived testify to the effectiveness of the gospel which Protestantism, as it is, has proclaimed and illustrated.

It has also been easy and popular among minds that mistake ignorance for liberality to ridicule the insignificance of the theological and ethical differences which from time to time have occasioned the divisions of Protestantism. Some of

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these divisions, of course, have risen from ridiculous and petty causes, and some are the natural manifestation of what Theodore Roosevelt called the lunatic fringe. But the great, historic divergences within Protestantism are not lightly to be dismissed by volatile nonconformists who have inherited the proceeds of their forebears' conflicts without participating in their passion. The differences which have given rise to the great denominations were considerably more than minority reports in the business meetings of social clubs. The various convictions of religious belief and ecclesiastical policy were not merely contradictory opinions preserved in a secretary's record; they have been more indelibly registered in the prisons of dissenters, the poverty of exiles, and the scaffolds of martyrs; and divisions for which brave men and women have died are not to be regarded or disregarded as the idle errors of negligible enthusiasts.

The ultimate unity of the Church must respect such distinctions, not alone because of their historic roots and heroic witness in the past, but because also they represent permanent and reasonable discriminations, though not hostilities, in spiritual appreciation and concern. The old order is continually changing, giving place to new; and the conditions amid which religion and the Church bear their testimony are not the same from generation to generation. But variations in the minds and temperaments of men are constant. There will always be intelligences to which the solemn mystery of the sacraments will be the surest avenue of approach to the presence of Christ, others for which theological definition and distinction will command primacy, and still others for which the more dynamic and emotional personal experience will be the compelling religious reality. There are moods and minds to which democracy seems best realized and implemented in the flexible government of Great Britain rather than in the more rigid organization of representative procedure in the United States. Likewise there are moods and minds to which presbyterianism in church government, or

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independency, or episcopacy seems more fully to reflect the spirit of the New Testament Church. There will always be Christians who find individual freedom paramount in religion and others to whom the church's corporate life is supreme. The complete unity of the Church will be no vague and passive generality but a positive, substantial reality of belief and urgency and commitment, historical, universal, spiritually apostolic; yet it must be related to these several historic confessions of faith and policy as the body of which they are the living members.

This clearly presents no easy accommodation of things that do not matter to minds which are only casually concerned. It involves the fundamental enterprise of society, that of preserving the rights of the individual while safeguarding the claims of the group, and this in the region of the mind and spirit as well as of the social action issuing therefrom. That unity in organization toward which we are looking is by no means here, and may indeed be much farther away than the expectant saints realize, so that such happy, forward-looking phrases as "the mobilization of the Church," "united Christendom," and the like have meaning only in a Pickwickian sense.

Consideration of any mass of maneuver in connection with the activities of religion in the postwar world requires, accordingly, a fairly thoroughgoing divergence from what have been the directions of thought and exuberance of language of many churchmen at the head of interdenominational bodies and at liberty on the platforms of interdenominational assemblies. If there were no more inherent reason, this lack of unity would seem to render futile the demand voiced in several quarters that the Church be represented at the peace conference. In the present state of Protestantism any such demand must meet the rejoinder, Which church? There is, besides, at least one inherent reason suggesting the futility of the demand, namely, the difficulty of justifying the presence of the Church at the peace conference without the tacit as-

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sumption that the Church is a temporal power. And while the principle of development in the life of religion and its institutional expression permits the possibility, no warrant can be found for the proposal in the New Testament.

But while united Christendom and even united Protestantism are only phrases as yet, there is unity of Protestant aims and efforts in certain social expressions, and in none more apparently than in the field of education. Church-controlled schools and colleges represent very definite identity of ideals not to be ignored in the light of the large number of earnest minds to whom, quite apart from religious considerations, the word "education" is a magical formula for the achievement of all perfection. Already they are comparing the astronomical sums expended by the government in the war effort with the amounts devoted to public and private education in the United States. If the schools and colleges had at their disposal any such amount as the prosecution of the war requires, or half of it, how far along the road to a perfected world we should be! But few bright and beautiful suppositions are so fallacious. Education in the church-controlled institutions and in those administered by the state is all of one piece, and the trouble is not that it has had insufficient financial support but that apparently the education has not been of the right kind. No matter how greatly increased its financial resources should be, more of the same kind of education would be no improvement. Dr. John A. Mackay, who is not a layman looking on the educational process from the detached viewpoint of a spectator, has written very emphatically that, although educational technics have reached a degree of perfection never attained before and educational facilities are greater than ever, educators themselves are evidently quite uncertain as to what educated people ought to do and be.

It is not merely that schools supported by public funds, in order to exhibit the tolerance demanded by religious minorities, have excluded religion and religious instruction



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from their curricula. What is more to the point, the kind of religious instruction given in church-controlled institutions has not resulted in such character and ideals and life as would distinguish their students and alumni from those of other institutions. Compelling freshmen to take snap courses in early Hebrew tradition or the Apostolic Age does not necessarily produce transforming religious conviction or furnish intellectual support for positive religious character. It is quite proper to reply that the college is not an evangelistic mission; but the reply loses something of its cutting edge in face of the fact that the urbane culture of the great past, which was once the center of liberal disciplines, highly cherished and seriously studied and used, has also been discarded. In its place, in one form or another, is the contemporary quest for vocational skills, education designed not as a highroad to understanding and appreciation but as a short cut to the cashier's window. Matthew Arnold's definition of culture, that "it seeks to do away with classes and sects; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, where they may use ideas, as it uses them itself, freely nourished and not bound by them," is almost a foreign language to the average campus. When one hears members of university faculties telling high-school graduates that the advantage of a college education is that it will increase their earning power; when college students are advised in their Freshman and Sophomore years to choose such courses as will prepare them for their professional careers—with never a hint of the far greater and more essential truth that, as Woodrow Wilson said but did not wholly illustrate, education is a means, not of getting on in the world, but of understanding and enjoying the world—the most appropriate comment would seem to be the old Roman aphorism that wisdom is acquired, not by years, but by disposition.

Wisdom and Wit are little seen,  
But Folly's at full length.

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But to suggest Arnold's or Woodrow Wilson's ideals as desirable before vocational training, would be considered today merely another exhibition of what Stark Young called the culture in Durham—"a passable taste in safe, stale things." Meanwhile superstition, political confusion and shallowness, and decadent moral standards are most prevailing and perhaps most dangerous, not among the uneducated but among the multitudes who have been professionally trained but untouched by personal culture.

Christian schools in non-Christian lands add their report to the record of disillusionment with education. The Christian churches are justly proud of their educational program, institutions, and results among non-Christian peoples. Higher personal and social ideals, broader sympathies, more enlightened ethics, have vindicated the efforts of the missionary schools. An increasing number of nationals whose opportunity for education began in missionary institutions have progressed to the greater universities of America or Europe and have returned to their own lands to take highly influential places in national and international affairs. The source of the social discontent which has characterized non-Christian peoples in recent years and is so powerful a force in the projection and progress of the new world order has been traced to the enlightenment furnished in Christian missionary schools.

But after several generations of missionary effort, the challenge of the missionary enterprise today rises from its difficulties rather than from its successes in the past or the permanence of its religious impact. There is a discouragingly large number of non-Christians, very influential in the political and military renaissance of their people, who owe their educational achievements to Christian schools but have either renounced, or remained impervious to, Christianity. Many an intelligent pagan has been taught by Christian teachers to employ the tools, technics, and science of Christian civilization and has remained hostile to the civilization

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and indifferent to its religion. In the light of this it was interesting, to say the least, to hear one of the most experienced missionary leaders, fresh from the field, say at the Delaware Conference in 1943 that Christians in their approach to those of other faiths must cease to emphasize the uniqueness of Jesus and must lay stress upon the similarities of the best in other religions to the best in Christianity. It is a technic which the Christians of the New Testament would not have understood. One wonders whether this blurring of the once-clear outline of a unique Christ and a distinctive, uncompromising religion is not responsible for the present paradox of intellectually brilliant leaders in non-Christian lands who have been educated in Christian schools but are implacable enemies of everything Christian. The faiths which have rivaled and at times surpassed Christianity in proselyting success and personal conviction are Islam and Communism, which are alike militant in spirit, distinctive in character, and uncompromising in their demands.

Certainly the notion which seems to have been held by some liberal missionary leadership, that Western science and sanitation, aspirin and the English language can be hurriedly combined with any rare old Oriental culture to produce a good garden variety of the Kingdom of God has not yet been justified by its results. Recognizing the good in other religions is almost, if not altogether, irrelevant. It isn't their good that defeats them; it is their bad. No physician ever brought a man through pneumonia by acknowledging that his patient had good humor and a Ph.D. And the more similarities there are between other religions and Christianity, the less reason there is for anyone to change. Of course, there is truth in other religions; their fault, as Pascal said in another connection, "is not in following a falsehood, but in not following another truth." The disappointment which the contemporary missionary situation has brought us is that, while modern skills have been developed among non-Christian peoples, and a new social and public opinion

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created, too many individuals in decisive positions have not been changed in personal character or ethical standards. Education, however administered, has disciplined pagan peoples in the use of power with no increase in moral purpose and ideal necessary for the right use of power. This, it needs hardly be said, is true as to the results of education upon ourselves. As one of our contemporaries put it in homely but vivid language, "We can't get chickens from the duck eggs we've laid." The result is that neither the organized churches, as such, nor the educational institutions, whether under church or state control, can operate as the combat force of religion in its postwar strategy.

But while the Christian churches are not united, Christians for the most part are; and although the religious content of modern education is atomic in quantity, intelligent Christians are more clearly apprehending, if not more constantly practicing, their loyalties to a common Christ and the common Kingdom which is his purpose and theirs. They offer a genuine, though not regimented, mass of maneuver to be directed against the objectives of religion in the postwar world.

This requires a technic in the conduct of the Christian evangel analogous to that which the army and the marines have found necessary in the warfare in the Pacific, the apparently spontaneous but thoroughly prepared operation known as infiltration. This is the "new" warfare which the correspondents described so vividly: the conduct of battle by handfuls of men, in single file or creeping irregularly through swamp and jungle, passing silently through hostile outposts to reach assigned positions and there, individual against individual, conducting each his private war against an enemy. Here a sharpshooter's rifle, a hand grenade there, a machine gun—hidden but effective—out yonder; and the fighting, not by divisions, brigades, regiments, or even companies, but each man on his own where the conflict flames. To the civilian observer, perhaps to many a soldier at the

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center of the storm, there would seem to be no strategy, no order, no organization of effort, no predetermined battle line. But the apparently dispersed and unrelated men are, nevertheless, following not a haphazard impulse but a carefully chosen combat system that fits the configuration of the field, the movements of the enemy, and the all-embracing strategy which the commanding officer or staff has conceived. It is a technic in which the troops have been trained in squads and companies, in brigades, divisions, and army-sized maneuvers over areas large enough to contain a battle. But they have been trained to act, not only in concert, but as individuals, according to the necessities of the conflict. To the directing minds it is a development and execution of tactics as definite as traditional movements of troops in company or regimental formation, reaching positions in formal battle order and reacting to varying emergencies of attack and defense by repeating under fire maneuvers rehearsed upon the drill ground. It is not a new warfare except to correspondents who are apt to regard matters outside their memory or hitherto beyond their knowledge as innovations in the history of the race; it is the recovered technic of the unregimented past when

. . . the farmers gave them ball for ball  
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,  
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,  
Then crossing the fields to emerge again  
Under the trees at the turn of the road,  
And only pausing to fire and load.

It is the craft and courage of the pioneer at the winning of the West in the stern, magnificent adventure of the advancing frontier. It is the technic of warfare in which the unit of combat and victory is the individual. Mussolini was unintentionally reporting history when he sneered at the Americans, as they stormed over Axis troops in Tunisia, that they were reverting to their Indian inheritance.

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Essentially, all warfare has rested on the individual. The rabble-rousing speeches of Hitler and his one-time Italian lackey and the more dignified bombast of their apologists have been voluble in the use of phrases like "historic destiny," "our historic mission," "the necessities of history"; and such phrases repeated often enough to people who do not understand them by officials who could not tell what they mean give the impression of vague, vast forces moving implacably to inevitable and tragic ends. Just such language appeared in the debates preceding the American Civil War. Sonorous phrases, of which Seward's "the irrepressible conflict" is the most memorable, gave the impression then that principalities and powers were converging to an inevitable struggle. But it was an individual that fired the first shot at Sumter; and during the entire war not a gun went off, not a caisson rolled, not an action began without some individual's giving the order and other individuals' responding. It was not Italy that invaded Abyssinia in 1935 nor the Italian Air Force that dropped bombs on defenseless Abyssinians. It was individual Italians who carried their rifles and rode their cannon to the slaughter of individual Abyssinians, and an Italian who reported the result of the bombs he dropped as like the crimson, expanding petals of a rose. It was not Germany that destroyed the library of Louvain or wrecked Guildhall and the Temple in London; it was individual Germans. It is not England and the United States that have shattered Cologne and Stuttgart, bombing the heart of Berlin and keeping the coasts of France a wilderness of destruction; it has been individual Englishmen and Americans, individual pilots flying bombers, individual bombardiers releasing bombs.

Even more important, it is the individual that is socially effective. Totalitarian Germany is organized upon the insignificance of the individual and the supreme value of the state. But it was organized by the one individual who is not included in the regimentation. Nazism would doubtless have

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made some mark in the world without Hitler, but it would never have been what it is without him. Revolutions in which the class or the group come to expression and power are always the work of individuals. Jean Jacques Rousseau, a badly educated ne'er-do-well living from hand to mouth by odds and ends of employment until he is thirty-eight years old, discovers by accident his talents and writes some pamphlets; and four years after he is dead, a French journalist who has read them climbs upon a table in front of a café in Paris, and the French Revolution is on the way. Karl Marx, an exiled German, lonely, embittered, unknown or ignored, lives in the British Museum writing a questionable philosophy of history; and thirty-five years later a Russian exile who has studied Marx's books returns to Russia and overthrows the empire of the Czars. The individual, as Björkman wrote, "is a hand reached out by the race for its own uplifting."

It is perhaps impossible, as it is certainly unnecessary, to discriminate all the influences affecting present-day life and our habits of thought, or to trace to their ultimate source all effects in contemporary experience. In an age of precisionists it would be unwise to attempt to identify the causes of the submergence of the individual in general interest. But the vogue of "the discussion method" in educational groups, particularly among college groups, is a significant evidence of the obscuration of the individual and his responsibility and importance. From the colleges it has become a popular technic of other young people's religious gatherings and the various youth movements led by perennially young men and women for whom life apparently begins at forty and who have found it profitable to prolong their adolescence until some time after life has begun. It has contributed to the diminishing of the individual's significance by its concern for all possible points of view without anyone's attempting to decide upon a preference for one of them. President Mackay of Princeton has told of a brilliant

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professor of philosophy who was advised by his older colleagues that if he committed himself to any definite point of view he would ruin his career as a philosopher. One may or may not agree with Professor Edgar Brightman that "the chief problem to which intelligence should address itself today is whether we can find truth that is socially useful." A case could be made for the necessity of finding truth true enough to warrant one's committing himself to it. Not so with the discussion method and its devotees. See all, hear all, say everything relevant and irrelevant alike, debate earnestly, but avoid the narrow-mindedness of reaching any conclusion! It is an intellectual technic best symbolized by Aesop's famous ass, equidistant from two haystacks and braying violently the multifarious attractiveness of each but starving to death because of his inability to choose which one to eat.

The connection between the submergence of the individual and the reluctance of instructors and discussion groups to come to definite conclusions is not as remote as at first it might seem to be. It cannot be said with complete assurance that debates without decisions and surveys of alternatives without the exercise of any choice are caused by the submergence of the individual; perhaps they cannot be said to be causes of it; but they are evidences of the individual's submergence and they contribute to its continuance. For conclusions are reached and decisions made by individuals; even those of groups are but the conclusions and decisions of the majority of the individuals present; and if individual decisions are considered unimportant in comparison with the feeling of the crowd in which individual differences are undisclosed, it is because the individual is considered unimportant. It is not important, at least, that he be allowed to count. Miss Georgia Harkness is reading with simple clarity the report of contemporary life and its discrediting of the individual when she writes that "it is the widespread loss of authority in personal living and in social relations that is mainly responsible for the chaos of our day."<sup>1</sup>



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Meanwhile names make news, as every newspaper man from editor to office boy knows. Our instinctive, irrepressible interest continues to be in individuals. Biographies are more popular and usually more readable than general histories. We become bored with descriptions of battles, but the exploits of Sergeant York and Colin Kelly and "Eddie" Rickenbacker fascinate us through innumerable repetitions of their adventures. This also accounts perhaps for the popularity of what seem to be the only remaining activities purposely emphasizing individual concerns: the activities of columnists daily reporting news items of no consequence about personalities who do not matter, and those of cartoonists illustrating impossible adventures of imaginary people designed for the entertainment of intelligences at the preschool level. What else can explain the fact that while the necessities of war production require restrictions of the use of paper, to the embarrassment of serious publishing interests, forests are still destroyed to maintain the stereotyped imbecilities of blanket-sized and humorless "funnies," the general effect of which is the vulgarization of the children's and other childish minds? Here and there a columnist makes a definite contribution to the reader's knowledge and understanding, and interprets contemporary events in the light of larger knowledge and experience. Some distinguished names ornament the craft. But specialized knowledge is not inexhaustible; and too many who began with information and insights by which serious readers could profit are succeeded by purveyors of pettiness, as army commissaries were once followed by sutlers supplying shoddy goods to soldiers who had no other market in which to buy. The attractiveness of some depends upon the degree to which their reports satisfy the

... lust in man no charm can tame  
Of loudly publishing our neighbor's shame;

and some maintain the currency of verbose commonplaces

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and personal opinions which are of no importance by the accidental eminence of their own social position.

When one thinks of humanity's immemorial dream of the Good Society, the Hebrew prophets' vision of a world in which national peace should be as a river and righteousness as the waves of the sea; when one thinks of Plato's ideal republic, the Utopias of a thousand years of European hopes, and our own high anticipations of a quarter of a century ago, the world reported in the newspapers looks like a riot in a lunatic asylum, a madhouse captured by a mob. What it evidently needs, in spite of the more comical idiosyncrasies of civilian defense officers, is not the much-emphasized reinforcement of morale by relaxations of sobriety and the cultivation of amusements and frivolities of mind. The Chinese and the Russians, whose robust heroism has magnificently endured the worst that war could bring, have needed nothing of the kind. What our share of the world needs is a serious preoccupation with fundamental realities of life and experience. It might be difficult to deny the recent charge that in such matters as should most concern us we have no more information than had the men of the Stone Age. Assuredly the historian half a millennium hence will find no easy explanation of the phenomenon that a great nation, eager for insights and understanding at a time of world-wide war, tragedy, economic and political revolution, apparently turned for satisfaction to Walter Winchell and "My Day."

But the arresting fact remains that, notwithstanding the vulgarity of the forms to which human interest turns, the interest is in the individuals with whom the gossip and trivialities of the columnists deal, and in the columnists themselves. What they write may be, like Cowper's watch that wants both hands, "as useless if it goes as if it stands," but they command the sustained interest of a body of readers numerous enough to warrant the immense financial expenditure required to satisfy them. May not the readers have

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turned to these vulgar forms because they have been deprived of the satisfactions once offered by nobler enterprises of life?

Is it not the chief disgrace in the world, not to be a unit;—not to be reckoned one character;—not to yield that peculiar fruit which each man was created to bear, but to be reckoned in the gross, in the hundred, or the thousand, or the party, the section, to which we belong; and our opinion predicted geographically? <sup>2</sup>

Whether or not it is a disgrace not to be reckoned as an individual, the constant repetition for half a century or thereabout of language concerning the social order, the sins of society, the social conscience, the responsibility of society, and the like, has obscured the fact that it is the individual in society who is the center of obligation and the unit of action. Accordingly, to suggest that religion, or rather its spokesmen, should return to reliance on the individual in the conduct of religious responsibility and advance has now the accents of a voice from the tombs. Ours has been an era in which the individual, in any capacity except that of the actor and of the occupant of the White House, has had to do a great deal of running to stay in the same place. In business and industry he has been pilloried for political purposes as an economic royalist, and a national administration composed of classroom administrators without business experience and public officials without financial responsibility has outlawed him as Public Enemy Number One. Although the demand for changed machineries and processes and for speed and volume in production which the war made upon industry was met only when rugged individualists were put in charge, there are numerous voices from places temporarily of importance still insisting that democratic freedom be preserved by the destruction of personal liberty. The peace of the common man, which in the various prospectuses from Washington we are assured will follow the winning of the war, looks very much like the highly organ-

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ized but not quite exuberant security of a state prison, in which no one is ill-fed, ill-clothed, or ill-housed and a benevolent regimentation has completely eliminated unemployment and fear of fear. In the new Garden of Eden—the phrase is Edward Hallett Carr's as well as the Scriptures—there will be a fowl in every pot, good roads, good radios, electric lights, open plumbing and double features. "There will be no far horizons and no invincible hopes."

Planned economy, political reform, regimented industry, may be necessary if the world is to be the home of secure and confident human life unmenaced by war and unemployment, but they are not enough. George Soule has declared that his formula for avoiding war and depression and for securing the advantages which material progress makes possible is simply "the better application of scientific method to an understanding of men and society"—which is naïve, to say the least. What is needed is not so much a better understanding of men as a new kind of men. The society we have is about the best we can ever get with the kind of men who make it. To expect a world of justice, peace, and good will because of a better understanding of unjust, quarrelsome, and selfish men and societies is no more sensible than to expect an old motorcar to run perfectly because the driver knows why it is likely to break down at any moment.

There is, of course, a measure of truth in the formula, because a better understanding of men might free us from the blight of a psychology which has also contributed to the submergence of individual responsibility. We have hardly yet appraised at its full strength the influence of the psychology that has been so prevalent in the classrooms of a generation and has interpreted consciousness and all its manifestations as automatic responses to external stimuli over which neither intelligence nor will has any control. Human behavior it explains as involuntary reaction to mechanisms unrelated to conscious purpose. It encourages no hope for improvement and, if accepted, inspires no effort. If love,

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hope, aspiration, compassion, the sense of loyalty, the splendor of ideals and the pathos of disappointment at our failure to reach them are but the results of "accidental collocations of atoms," of course the individual does not count. What matters is the unpurposed inescapable drift and direction of the human crowd reacting to unalterable mechanical necessity under the delusion that this reaction is the responsible collaboration of free minds freely choosing the ends they seek. "The most old-fashioned theologian, with a sense of human guilt and sin and error, was by far the better realist. Though the theologian's view of the external world might be weak as science, though he might be lazy in combining personal salvation and social aims, he at least knew that the internal world had dimensions of its own." <sup>3</sup>

For the truth is that the achievements and destiny of the crowd depend upon the character of the individuals composing it. "When you try to find the people, always in the end it comes down to somebody." The most satisfying social response to economic pressure, the regulation of incomes, and the just distribution of material rewards will leave untouched the critical problem of human life—its relief from disillusionment and defeated hope, from the frustrations of love and the tragedies of sorrow that give to moral purpose the appearance of futility. When all the freedoms have been established throughout the world, making war obsolete and unthinkable, when planned economy perfectly administered shall have made all men everywhere well fed, well clothed, well housed, and socially secure, it may still be a world in which men are selfish, unsatisfied, antagonistic, and in which human life is without adequate meaning or value or goal.

This projection of highly organized collectivism as the condition and instrument of a warless world and of the fulfillment of human destiny rises from the assumption that the winter of our discontent has sprung from economic pressure alone and that all the clouds which have lowered

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upon our house will be buried in the deep bosom of a planned economy.

But when discontent is associated with material standards alone, and purchasable comfort, and worldly opportunity, or, to put the matter in its most favorable light, when success and the goal of achievement are measured by the pleasures, however you may refine them, and by the pride of a few brief years of physical existence, beyond which there is nothing, and when for failure in these no compensation is held out, no supernatural hope, no refuge of peace here and now, such as the world cannot give—when the driving force of progress is so presented, what is there in the nature of things to offer in the long run any effective resistance to the innate desire of power after power that ends only with death? <sup>4</sup>

Religion would seem to have its greatest opportunity in meeting just such a situation as this which Paul Elmer More suggests; but, in its most prominent and public manifestations at least, religion has also lost sight of the individual in its concern for society at large. Formerly, aggressive Protestant Christianity made its major appeal to the individual, and in Methodism brought upon itself the coarse disapproval of Edward Irving and Carlyle. The great revival movements from the time of the Wesleys and Jonathan Edwards through the periods of Finney, Moody, Sunday, focussed everything upon the decision and experience of the individual. The abundant criticisms of revivalism and its technic are familiar and not without justification, but nevertheless it made religion real and left no doubt as to the reality of individual obligation. The converted individual had to be made to realize the social implications of his religious experience, and the social gospel came in like an army with banners. As a consequence, religion has come to be considered as fundamentally a social relationship, and dated conversion is as rare as a dodo. Year after year conferences, assemblies, boards, committees, this council and that national organization, issue

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pronouncements and declare expansive—and often, expensive—aims embracing industry, statesmanship, legislative reforms, and social reformations of one kind and another. Year after year what have been called “Preaching Missions” have been carried across the continent, with eminent speakers addressing large congregations of church members and the clergy upon all the evils of society from totalitarianism to radio advertising, unintentionally reminding the irreverent of what Jean Christophe called a numerical religion, “the number of the audience and the sum total of the receipts,” but resulting in no discoverable change in religious experience, understanding, or atmosphere. The prophets of reform who find in economics and environment all the materials of Utopia, and the preachers of righteousness whose field is the world of large auditoriums, lack Charles Sumner’s loftiness of manner but have all the false sense of value with which he declined Margaret Fuller’s invitation to meet a distinguished guest by saying, “I have gotten beyond interest in individuals.” They would do well to remember Margaret Fuller’s reply, “By the latest accounts, Charles, God hasn’t”; for it was precisely by this elimination of interest in individuals and of individual responsibility that great social orders in the past were destroyed.

If the crusaders keep at it long enough, who are all out to Christianize society by mass production without taking time or trouble to make any individual Christians, they will find themselves not only lacking anything vital enough to Christianize society but without justification for the attempt. They are deploying the energies of religion over society in general and its institutions while neglecting the evangel’s direct, inescapable demand as to the individual’s personal relationship to God. The result is that the primary nature and necessity of personal religion are so obscured that we now consider men religious if their credit is satisfactory and they are good to their mothers. “No religion which measures by the greatness of its rule and the age and size of its institutions, and

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not by the quality of its life and its faith and its hope, has any place in a world of infinite vastness.”<sup>5</sup> The life of faith and hope, the gifts of insight and understanding, the realities of character and obligation, reside in individuals, not in audiences or institutions. You cannot indict a people or regenerate a community or condemn an age or redeem a political or industrial order, however convenient the phrases may be, any more than you can inoculate a contagion or photograph a species. You have to deal with individuals in order to affect society. “Public morals are what personal religion makes them. . . . Public life will rise no higher than its source in personal religion.”<sup>6</sup>

Whatever permanent influence the Church has exercised in society has not been exercised through the reports of findings committees, resolutions of conventions, or the published utterances of ecclesiastical officials. It has been through the practical illustration and application of Christian principles by individual Christians in whatever decisions they have been compelled to make, whatever duties they have been compelled to perform, whatever responsibilities they have assumed. It is not merely possible, as T. R. Glover has suggested, “that the cause of Christ today might be helped by ambassadors who had fewer committees”; it is fairly certain. Lord Cecil, at the Oxford Conference of 1937, was not repeating a platitude; he was laying down a fundamental truth when he said that the most important thing the Church could do to contribute to international peace and a new world order would be to preach the gospel. For whatever may be the significance or availability of the gospel to society in general, it must be directed to individuals in particular, and must first be apprehended and exhibited by them. Christianity is not purely an individual matter; it is a personal matter which can be completely realized only in a community. But it is by individuals becoming Christians and exemplifying the Christian way of thought and life that a



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Christian community is maintained and the unchristian influences in a community successfully resisted.

So the detour returns to the proposal glimpsed in passing, that the Church should be at the peace conference. But if the question "Which church?" could be answered to unanimous satisfaction, if the presence of the church at the peace conference contained no implication of a claim to temporal power, the Church as an institution would nevertheless have no right to be there. It has never been the Church's business to make treaties. It is the Church's business to develop treaty makers. Its mission is not diplomacy but evangelization, not to make statesmen but to make saints. The Church has no more business to make statesmen than it has to make chiropodists or center fielders. It is not the function of the Church to maintain social institutions; at most it has to found them, establish their purpose in the conviction of society, and then surrender them to be society's responsibility. The function of the Church is to make Christians and to furnish the atmosphere in which they more clearly and constantly realize the presence of God and their obligations to him.

Of course, this is not sufficient either to bring about the Good Society or to maintain it after it shall be inaugurated. A world full of Christians might be a world full of mistakes and suffering and social friction. Many a good man is a social liability, and pious incompetents are probably as great a political menace as the shrewd sinners. Conversion does not guarantee common sense, and saintliness is neither a substitute for statesmanship nor training for it. If Christians participate in peace conferences, it will be not because they are Christians but because they are specially qualified in the technical matters in respect of which international agreements and adjustments must be reached. The Christian who aims to be a statesman cannot become one merely by reading the New Testament and writing speeches. He must learn the trade as specifically as he would if his aim were to be a carpenter or a chemist. The business of the Church is not

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to make him either; it is to make and keep him such a Christian that his Christianity will be apparent and effective in his carpentry or chemistry or statesmanship. No religious experience or exuberance of religious feeling relieves any Christian of the necessity of learning his trade before he practices it. This would be sad news, if they ever heard it, for the peripatetic magi who, having read *Berlin Diary*, the speeches of Vice-President Wallace, and references to *Mein Kampf*, know all the answers and tell the world in a few simple sentences how to do what the wisest practical minds in many nations have been trying for centuries to accomplish.

But to say that the business of the Church is to make and keep men such Christians that their Christianity will be apparent and effective in their work is to meet a question frequently asked in recent years: What kind of Christianity is it to be? For the disheartening paradox of contemporary Christianity is that, while Christians have been more intelligently and unselfishly active in the struggle for social righteousness than ever before, Christianity and the Church for a generation have been losing much of their radiance and the respect which hitherto they possessed. "The truths to which the church bears witness in its historic creeds, the central affirmations of its testimony, have for multitudes in what is known as Christendom become unreal and meaningless." 7

The matter is imperative because only the Church is commissioned and qualified to make those central affirmations; and to make them real and commanding among men is its primary, inescapable obligation to which its other activities, productive and necessary as they may be, are subordinate responsibilities. The critical concern of the Church and its members today is not with their social sympathies and program or their reconquest of art and tradition in the interest of worship. Their critical concern is with their faith. Their tactics must now be chosen with regard to the fundamental strategy of religion required by our time, the recovery to a generation of men whose religious beliefs are largely dying

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echoes of their fathers' robust certainties, of the historic verities of Christian conviction and experience.

The way out is the sound of a voice, not our voice but a voice coming from something we cannot disbelieve. It is the earthly task of the pastors to hear this voice, to cause us to hear it, and to tell us what it says. If they cannot hear it, or if they fail to tell us, we as laymen are utterly lost. Without it we are no more capable of saving the world than we were capable of creating it in the first place.<sup>8</sup>

Religion, accordingly, whatever portion of its interest and energy is to be given to the social gospel and its specific application, to the promotion of pacifism, and to concern with ritual, must now recover to the individual the universal religious beliefs without which the philosophies of contemporary catastrophe cannot be dispossessed. Unless this is accomplished, the world after the war will lack permanent moral resources and the conviction of adequate destiny sufficient to sustain the labor and sacrifices necessary for the achievement of the Good Society. The strategy of religion must involve, as military strategy involves, thorough grounding of the troops in knowledge of their field of operations, the responsible authority, and the ultimate ends of the campaign: the terrain, the command, and the objective. The terrain is first, in order at least. For if the world is "dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres," we are victims of futility; the ideal of the Good is a shadow in our dreams; the graves of the martyrs are but monuments to folly.

## V. THE TERRAIN OF CONFLICT

THE FIRST TRUTH WHICH RELIGION MUST REVITALIZE IN the thought and conviction of the present day is that we live in a supernatural world, that it is a supernatural world in which we conduct the enterprises and resolve the emergencies of what we call our natural lives. The discussion of this thesis does not aim to argue before untroubled Christians a confirmation of the faith they have not questioned, but will attempt to indicate something of the obvious which the genuine skeptic overlooks and to offer some suggestions of import to those whose religious certainty is clouded or whose religious adventure is imperiled by their acceptance of an unrecognized materialism with which the idea of the supernatural is incongruous. It will be well, at the beginning of the discussion, to divest ourselves of religious prepossessions; for genuine skepticism cannot be successfully met except upon its own ground. Our religious tradition and convictions gather around the presumption of the supernatural as an axiom of thought and life, and it is easy for Christians to overestimate the strength of their own apologetics. No discussion of the supernatural can end in proof; it can only arrive at an inference the cogency of which derives in part from the will to believe.

This, of course, is true, from the intellectual viewpoint, of the religious experience itself. To certain types of believer this may seem to be contradicted by the authority with which the religious experience witnesses the reality of God—that self-attesting experience which Dr. George A. Gordon called the sublime dialogue within the soul that con-

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stitutes the heart of religion. In its most vehement witness it is the mystical experience in which the mystic finds himself so immediately conscious of the divine presence that he describes the experience by saying that he is lost in God. Paul had such an experience, which he described by saying that he knew a man "(whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth) . . . how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." But while he did not know whether the man was in the body or out of the body, he knew who the man was. No matter how vivid and overwhelming the mystical experience, as Bishop McConnell has somewhere said, the mystic who claims to be lost in God, always knows who is lost. This certainty that it is God in whom he is lost is possible only to the mystic himself, and is possible to him only as the result of a process of reasoning and inference, swift and intuitive as it may be. For when any man believes or declares that he has experienced God, what has happened is that he has had an experience of such a kind that he believes that only what he means by God could account for it; and that is itself an inference.

The inference, however, is so powerful and cogent as to justify one's conduct of life and thought upon it. Certainly there can be no argument against his doing so based upon the mystery or any difficulty in the notion of the supernatural. It was no less skeptical a mind than Thomas Huxley who said long since: "Whosoever clearly appreciates all that is implied in the falling of a stone can have no difficulty about any doctrine simply on account of its marvelousness." The credibility of the supernatural is a matter simply of evidence strong enough to supply commanding probability.

Will Durant may have been correct when he said that there are more errors and absurdities in Aristotle than in any other philosopher who ever wrote; but there was neither error nor absurdity in his insistence, after Socrates, upon the necessity of definitions, an insistence which is irresistible

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at this point. What do we mean by natural? What do we mean by supernatural? Definitions are the result of protracted and very complex intellectual processes, the benefit of which we inherit but the cost of which we seldom realize. And "the conception of Nature," Rudolf Otto said in his memorable volume *The Idea of The Holy*, "as a single connected system of events united by laws is the final and most difficult outcome of abstraction."<sup>1</sup>

It is that idea of a single connected system which constitutes the core of any definition of nature, and no better definition can be found than that of Horace Bushnell if we omit a word which his theological loyalty required. Nature, accordingly, is that "realm of being or substance which has an acting, a going on, or process from within itself and by its own laws." The supernatural, then, is whatever by the necessities of its own being or activity cannot be in the chain of natural cause and effect, or whatever, as Bushnell again said, "acts on the chain of cause and effect, in Nature, from without the chain." Nature, it follows, must be incompetent to account for whatever may lie outside the chain of natural cause and effect, or for whatever acts on it from without the chain.

This understanding of nature is frequently overlooked, on the one hand, by those who are absorbed in its processes as they are discovered by unprejudiced research and, on the other, by those who are employed in the direction of natural energies to the uses, if not always to the benefit, of mankind —by the scientists, that is to say. The achievements of physics and chemistry in mechanical invention and new combinations of material usefulness and value, the employment of increasing knowledge of biological laws and conditions in the improvement of species and the mastery of disease, have resulted in a too common overestimate of the range and capability of purely natural energies and processes. In themselves and in the unlimited development of knowledge and power which they are presumed to open to patient explora-

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tion, they are considered sufficient to account for all things within the attainment and experience of man. Those who hold such considerations not only regard nature as a single connected system of events united by laws but reject, at least tacitly, the possibility that there may be some effective reality outside the system. They may be as humble as Isaac Newton, though they frequently are not, their utterances reminding one of the gardener whom J. B. Priestly encountered in his *English Journey*, who spoke of nature "as if he had been a member of the small committee that had appointed her."

Again this understanding of nature is overlooked by those given to what may be called the romantic view of it—a view far more popularly held than the scientific, and one long inspired and sustained by poetry. One visits Crater Lake or the Königssee, watches dawn breaking on the snow of Mt. Ranier, or sees the Jungfrau in the sunset, or the Cornish rocks below King Arthur's Castle where Hawker's great sea sobs like a sleeping vassal at his master's gate, with memories of Millay or Coleridge or Stevenson's "In the Highlands" or any of a hundred others who have immortalized in words a mood of natural beauty; and it is a very disciplined intelligence that does not overvalue what it sees and feels. Who has not read into nature's sensuous calm and beauty Wordsworth's purely romantic assurance that

... 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings.

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As for the preachers, do we not continually saturate our congregations' thoughts with metaphor and trope and simile that mislead docile and incautious minds into the belief that nature is a revelation, when in reality it is only the convenient vehicle of what we or they have imputed to it? George H. Morrison, for instance, tells his great congregation that "someone is calling where the winds are sighing; someone is moving where the leaves are rustling; someone is yearning toward the human heart where the waves are breaking on the shore." A sentence like that is irresistible. But what has actually happened? This: that in the positive Christian conviction out of which his preaching and the interest of his congregation alike arise the preacher has assumed—as he had a right to assume, although from quite other premises—the fact and personality of God; and to him and to those who hear him nature is a vehicle of revelation of the God whom they have already taken for granted.

This chapter assumes nothing except the credibility of our senses and of the experiences common to our humankind. It accepts nature as a realm of being or substance which has an acting, a going on, or process from within itself and by its own laws. It can reveal nothing of whatever may be outside and other than itself except through effects which may evidence themselves within the framework of nature, the origin of which will not be discoverable within that framework. But, that being so, if we shall find such effects within the framework of nature, the origins of which are not discoverable within that framework, we shall have the right to infer that their origin is not within the natural chain of cause and effect and hence is, in some way, supernatural. Are there, then, any such effects discoverable in nature, for which nature cannot account? It is the thesis of this chapter that there are such effects, inextricable from our knowledge and experience of the world in which we live, and that the incompetence of nature to account for their origin makes inevitable the inference of the reality of the supernatural.



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One may begin with the familiar, trite, but still undeniable fact that nature is incompetent to account for life, the origins of which that can be discovered within the chain of cause and effect in nature refer the inquiry to a still further cause not discoverable within the natural chain. No pageantry depicting the accomplishments of man surpasses in magnificence and fascination the report which science makes of the progress of living forms from "the dark backward and abysm of time" to the latest bright morning of the world. The poetry of it, prophetic in its anticipation of what lay hidden behind centuries of ignorance, is in the Norse legend of Yggdrasill, the Life-tree, which, "wide-waving," as Carlyle wrote, "many-toned, has its roots deep down in the Death-kingdoms, among the oldest dead dust of men, and with its boughs reaches always beyond the stars; and in all times and places is one and the same Life-tree." But the undecorated and dull prose of modern science is vibrant with drama, so solemnized by the ruthless tragedy which haunts every advancing stage, and significant in every chapter of the incorrigible mind of man as he explores with illimitable patience the farthest reaches of his universe, so mysterious, so splendid, so vast. In the discoverable beginning—note the adjective—of an evolutionary process, with the story of which we are familiar, is that first simple unitary cell, unconscious, yet sensate and alive—a single point of animate existence in an insensate world incredibly immense. The now familiar report records the slow march of millenniums, age after age, aeons after aeons, until only eternity suggests a more incomprehensible duration. Slowly, by infinitesimal accretions of form and function, by infinitesimal variations of shape and structure, the multiplying species adapt themselves to climate, soil, topography, and sustenance; and the animal world is here; while behind it in the long pilgrimage of physical progress are the innumerable lost battalions of nature's trial and error, the inade-

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quate individuals and species defeated in the struggle to survive.

That is a very kindergarten sort of summary of a process no less complex because its general outline is so familiar and commonly accepted. Poetry and prose alike, it is no mere wonder tale but the supreme epic reported by the mind of man. With allowance for reasonable proportion of error and due consideration for the areas yet remaining into which the exploration has not fully penetrated, the essential truth of the report is beyond doubt. To use a general phrase, not wholly in good repute, and without commitment to any particular statement of evolutionary theory, nature does exhibit the survival of the fit. But it has no explanation of the arrival of that first unitary living existence from which all succeeding forms have risen into the struggle to survive. Nothing in all the splendid evolution which has followed it accounts for its presence. For the physical order creates nothing new; what may seem so is redistribution of stuff already here, not creation. At that frontier nature and the human mind together can only stare voiceless, like lost explorers gazing on some alien, unhorizoned sea.

One need not turn to contemporary minds such as Jeans and Eddington, whose scientific judgments have always been admittedly on the side of the angels. Henri Bergson, who cannot be charged with any religious prepossessions, wrote in his greatest volume which, it is to be remembered, did not employ the hypothesis of God:

The more science advances, the more it sees the . . . heterogeneous elements which are placed together, outside each other, to make up a living being. Does science thus get any nearer to life? Does it not, on the contrary, find that what is really life in the living seems to recede with every step by which it pushes further the detail of the parts combined? <sup>2</sup>

Bergson has another word which, while not necessary to this chapter, is relevant to its purpose, a word reminiscent of

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Paley, whose famous watch, in his discussion of theism, has been a pariah in the classrooms and laboratories of half a century. Like a lewd fellow of the baser sort who has crashed the gate into some shocked company of the elite, it has been thrown out with more violence than consideration. But one cannot get rid of a watchmaker by throwing his watch out of the window; and while Bergson would probably have denied any kinship with Paley, he speaks a language Paley would have approved. It is in his remark that he saw in the whole evolution of life on our planet an effort to arrive at what is only realizable in man.

But he did not say whose effort he saw; or, if the inquiry must steer clear of theism, he did not say the effort of what. In the implication of such a statement, however unintentional on Bergson's part, the banished argument from evidences of design begins dimly to reappear. Those evidences and the data which they represent supernaturalism can explain; naturalism must explain away.

The discussion continues in the realm of physics. The presence of motion throughout nature is indispensable to its constitution as we know it; yet of the ultimate origin of motion, nature can give no account. Awareness of objects—if not, indeed, intelligence itself—first registers in the recognition of motion; and once intelligence is awakened, the world is known to be always to a greater or lesser degree in action. The blade of grass, the summer foliage, or the fluttering leaves of autumn, the winds that shout or hardly whisper as they pass above Stevenson's bird-enchanted hills, the clouds that Shelley saw, the sifting atoms of disintegrated granite that Ruskin followed from their Alpine peaks to the fertile valleys far below, James Whitcomb Riley's tiny, flying motes among the sycamores—such common things compose the multitudinous reality of the everyday world. Motion is never absent from the scene. There is no such thing as still life. That is an artist's phrase that corresponds to no reality. The

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apparent stillness is itself a theater of motion no less real for being invisible to human eyes.

Unceasing also, though also unseen, unfelt but inexorable and constant are the forces which make the inanimate world a realm of motion, through what we call occurrences or accidents or the familiar operations of nature. The shifts of gravitation that release an avalanche or pull a cascade down the mountainside or bring a partridge to the ground;

. . . the grating roar  
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,  
At their return, up the high strand

of Dover Beach; Old Man River as he keeps rolling along—all are responsive to some imperative behest that issues in their motion.

It is impossible to imagine the revolution in the minds of the man and his contemporaries who first realized that beyond their own unconsidered activities and those of the animal world so visible around them, beyond the slides and stirrings of the inanimate world, the skies above them were alive with motion. To the first minds sufficiently awakened to apprehend it, the sun's unceasing march across the mysterious expanse of space must have aroused emotions into which we cannot now enter. When the man with mathematics in his mind and a rude telescope in his hand contradicted the observation of the centuries and declared that not the sun but the solid earth was whirling on an endless journey, he met unanimous, impassioned denial. The worst that can be said about the Reverend John Jasper, declaring from his nineteenth-century pulpit that the sun do move, is that he was an anachronism. But he would have been at home with incredibly more generations of human thinking than we should be. Of a hundred centuries of civilized mankind, not six have fully believed that the earth was moving. And when men discerned, in contradiction of the testimony of their

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senses, that the earth was in motion as well as the sun and that these, along with the innumerable stars, were wheeling in ordered magnificence through distances beyond the comprehension of the mind, what a drama was presented to intelligence and credulity!

Our own times have been confronted with no less amazing disclosures. The magnificence beyond our globe is matched by marvels within its most trivial fragment. There, also, motion is the meaning of it all. Every atom is a universe of power and speed. What was once the dense, firm structure of imperishable matter is discovered now to be but the theater of unceasing activities, and all the ever-so-solid objects apprehended by the senses are but fluid cages of imprisoned energies in co-ordinated flight. Matter was the name which, in our ignorance, we gave to what in reality is motion; and our cosmos is not other than incalculable energy storming along productive pathways of the infinite and infinitesimal alike.

There is no end to the respect with which we must regard the minds whose daring and patient explorations have brought such incredibilities into the common knowledge. Can anything be beyond the reach of their discovery? One hesitates to question. But at the edge of the cosmos which has surrendered so many secrets to their search, at the farthest reach of their exploring minds, the ultimate origin of motion remains unknown. The electron says, It is not in me! The solar worlds that whirl in all the guise of freedom say, It is not with us! The moving universe can only point to the frontier no search has crossed and signal that the answer lies still farther on. The realm of being, with its acting, its going on, or process from within itself and by its own laws, cannot account for this characteristic, indispensable feature of its own constitution. The origin of motion does not lie within the world we know.

*Except* in the one case of the mysterious reality of the purposing human, or the instinctive animal, will. I will; and

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my hand, which has been motionless, moves at once across the paper on the desk. Another wills; and a series of quiescent muscles spring to life, communicating motion, releasing power, and changing perhaps the very face and atmosphere of nature itself. A man wills, and moves; and the engine starts, a cannon rains destruction on a village twenty miles away, an airplane rises, piano keys initiate a thousand atmospheric vibrations and a Brahms *Requiem* is recreated, a brush upon a canvas evokes a nocturne in blue and gold. The will originates motion, and the world of human achievement follows. But the explanation of that origin is still wanting, as it was in Browning's old yellow book,

Since how heart moves brain and how both move hand,  
What mortal ever in entirety saw?

Can it be that motion leads at last to where, beyond the frontier that science has not crossed, there is an originating, effective other Will? What remains of mechanistic determinism points to the same inquiry. The human will, it declares, is not free. Its action, which seems so voluntary and originitive, is itself the issue of inescapable controls. But where did the controls begin? And from what control did motion, then, originally rise? Such questions are the very alphabet of naïve curiosity, as determinism lands the mind in front of the same invulnerable frontier. Nature has no answer. It can only suggest that the answer which it cannot give lies with some reality outside its processes and laws.

Such a suggestion comes from yet another quarter. After an April shower had ended in a blaze of sunshine on Princeton lawns and apple blossoms, former President Cleveland asked, "What makes it so beautiful? . . . Where does it come from?" and added, "It is too good for us. . . . It is something we don't deserve."<sup>8</sup> Not everyone looking at apple blossoms blowing through an April afternoon would comment on the scene so intelligently; but most observers would experience,

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though silently, the awareness which Mr. Cleveland expressed, that of "the incongruity between our feelings of beauty and a materialistic account of their origin." Reflection will discern that even if all the other qualities, capacities, developments of form and function in nature, are directed, as the evolutionary theory must properly maintain, toward utility, there is no convincing evidence that beauty is so directed. The toughness and tenacity of roots, the shape and texture of leaf and bud, the savor of the blossom that attracts the bee, the swiftness of the rabbit, and the sloth's curved claws are all adaptations of instruments to demands, upon meeting which survival depends. But beauty is not required by survival processes. The most rugged growths and the most fragile alike show symmetries of form and harmonies of color unrelated to utility.

The explanation of beauty and brilliance in the plumage of male birds has been that they are a provision for sex attraction and hence are the outcome of biological urge. Acceptable as the explanation may be, it remains true that the colors, however beautiful and brilliant, do not of themselves attract the ornithological lady. It is only when they are worn by the right kind of bird that she evinces any conjugal interest. Duplicate on a thrush the precise coloration of a courting robin, and not even the most eager robin spinster will be fooled. What further must not be overlooked is that we cannot possibly know that the combination of colors which seems beautiful to us makes any impression upon the bird corresponding to the impression we receive from the beautiful. And it is beauty in nature, as beautiful *to us*, which cannot be explained by utility. It appears to be a bonus added to the dividend of usefulness. Furthermore, when every stage in the development of leaf and stem and blossom, in animal form and the hues of wing and feather, has been traced and every part and process located within the chain of natural cause and effect, there is nothing within that chain to explain why the total effect of wood and meadow, mountain

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and sea, the cattle on the hills, a flying water fowl, and a single flower should altogether produce the impression of beauty.

At this point the temptation rises to invoke the argument from design, and it may be that on examination we should discover the argument from design to be especially cogent in respect of the origin of beauty. But, leaving it in limbo, we face another challenge from the fact that, even if we compel ourselves to accept natural causes, not only for the components but for the total effect of beauty, the implications of our feelings do not end with the beauty itself. On any physical theory explaining—to use a phrase of A. J. Balfour's—what we admire, or any psychological theory explaining our admiration, beauty comes to us, not merely as a phenomenon, but as a revelation. We cannot rest in the knowledge of its immediate cause; it carries with it the impress of purpose.

The explanation has been advanced that this may be because the perception of beauty does not rise from the object perceived but in the constitution of the perceiving intelligence. "I may first remark," said Darwin, "that the sense of beauty obviously depends on the nature of the mind irrespective of any real quality in the admired object." This would seem to sustain the inference that beauty is a gift rather than an instrument of utility. The problem, at any rate, is one of the process of knowledge. The goats that crop the herbage of Mont Blanc, the cattle in the valley of the Wye, have gazed on all that lay before the eyes of Coleridge and Wordsworth; but none of them ever saw the splendor of Chamonix or the loveliness of Tintern Abbey. The recognition of beauty may seem to be explainable within the chain of natural cause and effect, but beauty itself is not. It is unique and confronts us, furthermore, with the relationship acknowledged by philosophy from Plato to the present day which Kant identified by saying that "an interest in the beauty of nature for its own sake is always a sign of goodness."



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That word takes the discussion still further out of the realm of things and into that of values; and to the question about the origin of beauty is added that of the origin of goodness. What is implied in the basic morality innate in every man? How does the universal distinction between right and wrong come about? For the distinction is universal. If a man or a group of men is discovered denying that right and wrong are anything more than appraisals of conduct in terms of social expediency, and so are without absolute authority, it will be discovered also that each man recognizes a distinction between right and wrong that has authority over *him*, violation of which, regardless of his philosophy, results in regret that rises at times to the intensity of remorse. Every man, in other words, has some moral standard the maintenance of which is necessary for his self-respect. This does not involve identity of moral standards. Standards and expressions of moral obligation vary as widely as do standards and ideals of beauty. In respect of the latter, Helen of Troy and Cleopatra would probably win the vote of those who have inherited the classic tradition, in so far as they have not capitulated to the cosmetic loveliness through which is expressed the genius of Hollywood. But the natives of Dahomey would accept as beautiful nothing less than blackness and obesity. Both Dahomey and the classicists would be alike, however, in their response to the ineradicable idea of beauty itself. So Moses writing his memorable, "Thou shalt not steal," and the legendary Spartan allowing himself to be torn by the stolen fox, in his belief that not theft but discovery was wrong, are a world apart in their moral standards but side by side in their recognition of the basic obligation sustaining different standards.

But let the most humanistic, naturalistic view of these moral standards be assumed. Let it be said that what we call the moralities governing conduct are simply defense mechanisms which men early found to be necessary for social survival. Let it be agreed that an individual's conscience is, as

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it has been called, a brief summary of the traditions of the society of which he is a member. Let it be said that personal affection is wholly sensual in its origin and that honesty and truthfulness are no more than traditional and rather sentimental observances of taboos that have survived the emergencies which originally produced them. These, it is true, are bold assumptions. Ever since Kropotkin's volume, a generation ago, *Mutual Aid; a Factor of Evolution*, it has been recognized that survival among lower animals has depended on co-operation within the group, closely resembling the altruisms upon which human social organization depends, while within the apparent altruisms of the animal world anything like our moralities is wholly absent. Nevertheless there seems to be a great deal of pertinence in the question which Celsus asked and Origen preserved, "Come now, if one were to look down from heaven upon earth, in what respect would *our* actions appear to differ from those of ants and bees?"

One answer is that it would depend upon how far into our actions and those of ants and bees one looked. For instance, the fundamental virtue upon which the existence of society depends is loyalty. The members of a social order must be devoted to a common end more desirable and commanding than the good of any individual member. In the pursuit of that end, the maintenance of the society itself, the individuals must be willing, if necessary, to sacrifice their own good, their comfort, possessions, and even life itself. In the conduct of such a society there will be division of labor, diversities of function and eminence; but there will be a common loyalty to the communal life. All of these qualities are exhibited apparently by the beehive and the anthill. There is division of labor; the individuals pursue a common end which is accounted more commanding and desirable than the good of any one of them. The bees will die in defense of the hive, the ants in defense of the hill. So well ordered and so efficiently conducted is the community life of bees and ants that with

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no reference to the philosophy of Celsus, moralists of ancient and modern times have always pointed to them as examples for the emulation of humanity.

But there is an irreducible difference between the anthill or the beehive and the human community. No bee or ant ever selected the object of his loyalty or balanced alternatives of conduct or obligation. If we discover what seems to be honesty, industry, thrift, and self-sacrifice among ants or bees, these are qualities which not a bee or an ant ever chose to possess or even knows that he possesses. Bees and ants appear to be loyal to their groups, but they do not know that they are loyal and did not choose so to be. "No member of the community thinks that it could do something different from, and more agreeable than, the inherited task. Nor in truth could it." <sup>4</sup> No member of the community of ants or bees ever thinks about his work or distinguishes between his personal interest and that of the community. There is nothing within the ant or the bee or the instinctive processes which govern them to which it can occur that some other occupation might be more effective or agreeable. The bees and the ants receive without reflection the reports of their senses; they do not think about them. There is no development, no change, no improvement in the social process of the hive or hill. The bees that a summer tourist sees as he travels the suburbs of Rome, or did travel before the war made touring impossible, are doing precisely as the bees there did when Vergil watched them with Maecenas at his side on his Sabine farm two thousand years ago. Not even Mussolini and his Fascists ever achieved the social regimentation in which they were perfected millenniums ago. For bees and ants obey their disciplines; they do not choose them. They are agents, not authors; automata of instinct, not originators of free action; and from millennium to millennium there is no variation in their ways of life. "In a hive or an anthill the individual is riveted to his task by his structure, and the organization is

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relatively invariable, whereas the human community is variable in form, and open to every kind of progress."

More than that, the human mind does things with and to nature that nature has never done of itself. Scientists of the United States Department of Agriculture are demonstrating that at their research center at Beltsville, Maryland. They have developed a chicken that lays eggs with whites particularly suitable for poaching. They are raising bees with a specially long proboscis in order to reach into the deeper flowers, bees that are specially shaped so as to carry more cargo, specially fueled so as to work in colder weather, and with a pacifist disposition which renders them less impetuous and impartial in the distribution of their resentments. These scientists have developed a pig with all a former's food values and none of his debilities, giving him a red complexion impervious to the sun and a disposition to match. They have developed a strain of chickens in which from the time they break through the shell the roosters have a black stripe down their backs and the hens have not, so that poultrymen can supply their customers' most meticulous demands with no embarrassing social errors.

These and other such achievements have been imposed on nature. They are results within nature's chain of cause and effect, but they have been projected from without. Man, that is to say, is both inside nature and outside as well. His physical structure is wholly within its forces and controls, but he looks upon it as from without and with a detached intelligence; and he acts upon nature to make changes in it which, without him, nature would never produce. He is the only creature who ever does that. The cleverest animal that ever lived—Gargantua or Peter Rabbit or Br'er Fox or Ferdinand the Bull—never did anything of the kind. Not only is the human community variable in form, but the human mind can reach within the animal and vegetable world and through nature and within its chain of cause and effect create new kinds and species.

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Another factor distinguishing the condition of the individual in the voluntary human community from the individual in the instinctive, mechanical community of bee or ant or herd, is without any counterpart elsewhere. That is the transmutation of the biological sex urge into the pure passion of human love. Alfred Noyes, in his spiritual autobiography, remarks that a great part of the contemporary world considers human affection as probably bestial in its origin. Whatever its origin, human love is in itself a splendid magnanimous, spiritual passion, capable of and evidencing the highest altruism and sustaining the noblest and most unselfish ends. But no scientist can track the progress of development from the physical, biological urge which is its origin into the spiritual experience and energy which it has become. This also seems to be a datum of history, as it is a datum of personal experience; and, reverting for a moment to nature as a reality which has an acting, a going on, or process, from within itself and by its own laws, there is nothing yet discerned within the natural chain of cause and effect to account for this transmutation.

That there always have been hedonists in whom there appears to have been either no such transmutation of the biological urge or, at most, very feeble and intermittent transmutation does not impair but rather strengthens the argument. They illustrate the freedom from coercion, in even the noblest areas of possible experience, upon which morality depends. For there can be no obligation apart from freedom. A completely determined world would be a world without duties. It would be the world of the bee and the ant and Mr. Darrow's argument for the defense—only that, as to the latter, his argument and its success would have no more significance or value or desirability than a first-rate lynching of his clients. The hedonists, who, after all, are a very negligible minority, by demonstrating that human conduct can nullify in the individual what is a datum of history and experience in the race, suggest that the transmutation they

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defeat, the origin of which eludes science, may have originated in Will rather than in the nature which cannot account for it. And the drab shallowness of the individual inner life which accompanies that hedonism reinforces by its sordid contrast every inference of a nobler destiny.

Among the loftier brows of our contemporary intelligentsia it has been considered bad taste to quote Mr. Walter Lippman; but he has so deftly applied an observation of Joseph Wood Krutch that, regardless of obloquy, it may well be cited here. Mr. Krutch was referring to Aldous Huxley's evident delight in mocking sentiment with physiology and in placing the emotions of the lover in comic juxtaposition with biological knowledge. Huxley's characters, Mr. Krutch writes, and Mr. Lippman quotes, feel the biological urge unaccompanied by any sense of sin and in consequence are hardly aware that they are seeking love; of course they never find it, and are not content with themselves. "In a generally devaluated world they are eagerly endeavoring to get what they can in the pursuit of satisfactions which are sufficiently instinctive to retain inevitably a modicum of animal pleasure, but they cannot transmute that simple animal pleasure into anything else. They themselves not infrequently share the contempt with which their creator regards them, and nothing could be less seductive, because nothing could be less glamorous, than the description of the debaucheries born of nothing except a sense of the emptiness of life." <sup>5</sup>

It is a page of more or less ephemeral criticism, but it is also a report of genuine experience. Not even the most sophisticated and realistic intelligence, giving fullest expression to physical nature, to the coercions and attractions of biological function as instinctively urged, can make any more of them than biology. But for and in the human race they have been transmuted into spiritual experience so rich in strength and joy and unselfish purpose that on it, rather than on biology, what we call civilization has risen. That experience has widened and deepened into maternal, paternal,

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fraternal, conjugal love, into the whole range and glory of domestic affection, of which nothing in the process from within what we call nature, and by its own laws, can give an account.

Something corresponding to maternal and paternal love is evident intermittently in the realm of the lower animals. Some, although very few, of the lower animals take a single mate for life. Many animals and, of course, birds—though not all—cherish and defend their young with unmistakable appearances of affection. Some manifest immediately a savage hostility to their young. But whatever may be the number and species of those that evidence appearances of love for their young when small and helpless, practically none evinces any distinguishing relationship to, or affection for, its young after its young have become independent; and no animal or bird, however devoted it may be to its children, so much as recognizes its grandchildren. Each generation of animal or bird evidently feels instinctive responsibility for only the generation immediately following. This transmutation of the biological urge into the pure passion of love is a process and result of which nature gives no account.

The next stage in the investigation of nature in the quest for the supernatural leads still further into the distinctiveness of man. In the scientist's modern triumph over the theologian, nature claims man as wholly her own—his form and structure a product of the long, devious evolutionary process, the operations of his muscle and of his mind alike confined within the chain of natural cause and effect. As Stuart Sherman said, "The great task of the nineteenth century was to get man into nature; that of the twentieth is to get him out again."

Of course he cannot be gotten out, but the question may be raised as to how another inextricable factor in his humanness got in. That is the factor manifest in what we know as morality. Physical concepts and materialistic speculation cannot "interpret and explain the meaning and worth of the

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life of the spirit in history, society, and the individual." In any consideration of man, however deeply embedded in nature he may be, the moral sense cannot be ignored. Reference has already been made to the universal distinction between right and wrong, wholly apart from the various conceptions of what actually constitutes them. The question now is, How or whence comes this intuitive recognition of their distinctiveness? How does a man know that he has done amiss? How does he know that he is not what he ought to be, in the realm of what we call morality? What is the source of that self-respect which is wholly apart from social opinion? How does the sense of ought rise so inescapable within the human consciousness?

Socrates elaborates his argument against the realism of Callicles, an argument establishing his particular form of response to the moral imperative. But when he rests his case and declares his conduct, it is upon a conviction more commanding than his logic. "Renouncing the honors at which the world aims," he says, "I desire only to know the truth, and to live as well as I can, and, when I die, to die as well as I can. . . . The best way of life is to practice justice and every virtue in life and death. This way let us go; and in this exhort all men to follow." But it is not by his arguments that Socrates gets that way. For what, speaking strictly, is obligatory in obligation, as Bergson put it, "does not come from intelligence. The latter only supplies the element of hesitation in obligation." The sense of obligation, the tremendous "I ought," that speaks in Socrates as in every other man, antedates all arguments which rationalize its coercions or try to defend the violation of it.

The voices of the nineteenth-century agnostics doubtless sound amid their brisk, cocksure successors as those of mere dabblers in disbelief; but nevertheless they still sound. The letter which Huxley wrote to Charles Kingsley has been quoted ever since as one of the supreme expressions of the sovereignty of the moral imperative:



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As I stood behind the coffin of my little son the other day, with my mind bent on anything but disputation, the officiating minister read, as a part of his duty, the words, "If the dead rise not again, let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." I cannot tell you how inexpressibly they shocked me. . . . What! because I am face to face with irreparable loss, because I have given back to the source from which it came, the cause of a great happiness, still retaining through all my life the blessings which have sprung and will spring from that cause, I am to renounce my manhood, and, howling, grovel in bestiality? Why, the very apes know better, and if you shoot their young, the poor brutes grieve their grief out and do not immediately seek distraction in a gorge.

It is sad business after eighty years to scrutinize with criticizing mind so eloquent an expression of personal conviction given special dignity by so intimate a sorrow, but there may be more in it than appears. That misunderstanding, and indeed misrepresentation, of Paul's word to the Corinthians suggests the need for discernment. For when Paul wrote, "Let us eat and drink," he was not inviting unbelievers in immortality to renounce their manhood and grovel, howling, in bestiality. It is true that the apes grieve out their grief before they plunge again into the normal gluttony of their kind. They do not *immediately* seek distraction in a gorge. But when their grief has been assuaged—and it does not take a great deal of time—then they do grovel in repeated gorges, not as a distraction of the mind, but as the customary habit of behavior and ideal of life.

Why doesn't Huxley do this when he has grieved out his grief? With what imperious admonitor, speaking within, has he to reckon? How did he realize that if he is to respect himself, his daily conduct must be guided, not by physical appetite, or even by intellectual judgments as to the expedient, but by an innate sense of moral obligation which declares the right? He continued in his letter to Kingsley:

I can tell you exactly what has been at work. *Sartor Resartus*

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led me to know that a deep sense of religion was compatible with the entire absence of theology. Secondly, science and her methods gave me a resting-place independent of authority and tradition. Thirdly, love opened up to me a view of the sanctity of human nature, and impressed me with a deep sense of responsibility.

That, no one can doubt, is an accurate account of the influences which molded Huxley out of the disorderly experiences of his boyhood into the humane and cultured personality he became. But to what did those influences appeal? What more can be said about them?

Huxley was in his teens when he first read the book and began to discover, as he was to write twenty-five years later, that "a deep sense of religion was compatible with an entire absence of theology." But Carlyle's book did not create that deep sense of religion; it was already there, a factor in his self-consciousness and life. Science and her methods gave him a resting place independent of authority and tradition, but no one knows what he means by a resting place unless it was that sense of purpose which he found behind and through nature, for which, with all his explorations, the chain of natural cause and effect could not account. And when we read that love opened to him a view of the sanctity of human nature, we are not only back at the unexplained transmutation of the biological urge into the spiritual reality of great affection; we are forced to inquire why love did not open a view of the sanctity of *all* nature unless human nature is something more, unless its sense of obligation, which rises with unique authority in the light of great affection, "hath had elsewhere its setting and cometh from afar."

Nature discloses no origin of the sense of what for millenniums men have called the higher values discoverable in the long, distorted, often thwarted, but unending struggle of mankind. It cannot account for the unselfishness which continually has enlarged men's visions of justice, brotherhood, and peace to include the race. It has no explanation

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of how those visions rose; but common sense, as George Santayana put it, "cannot dispense with a moral interpretation of the universe." Nor is this all. Let the materialistic conception of morality and its origin and function be admitted; grant that our moralities and all we mean by the word, the requirements of truth and justice and loyalty and the rest, are hangovers from a time long past when they were necessary for human survival; grant that the sense of obligation is itself a defense mechanism established by human experience in a remote crisis age, and that the individual's conscience is just "the unconscious summary of the traditions of the society of which he is a product." Then we must find an answer to the questions: What kind of society is it that would develop traditions that can be summarized in conscience? In what kind of world would men find what we call morality necessary for survival? And the answer is inevitable: a moral society and a moral world. "A great community," as Albert Parker Fitch has said, "is a record of man's supernaturalism."

For half a century there has been persistent emphasis to the contrary, to which the exponents of religion have given only the scantiest consideration. Without any reflection upon the insight and ability, the sincerity and attractiveness of the generation's preaching as it has dealt with the bewildering variety of modern life, nevertheless too many pulpits have been vocal with ethical urgencies demanding action and miscellaneous homilies demanding nothing at all, to the exclusion of the historic and sustaining declarations of spiritual reality that make large demands on the mind. But there can be no future for a religion of ethics and entertainment except the pallid career of a minority culture. Men must realize that they live and have to conduct the enterprise of life in a world of nature that cannot account for its own noblest characteristics nor satisfy their inquiring minds with its explanations of their origin and desires. They must recognize again the imperative standards of value which,

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as men, they are required to meet. The terrain of the conflict which religion wages on behalf of its ideals of justice, security, peace, and the freedoms which the United Nations have promised is a supernatural world. The basis of its demand upon and its explanation of the wistful paradox of human experience is its historic affirmation that "the environment with which man has to deal is in fact much bigger and more lasting than this world, in relation to which his powers have unfolded and have their immediate application." <sup>6</sup> And it is this supernatural character of the world, one of the fundamental but neglected elements in its evangel, which religion, as part of its postwar strategy, must again declare with convincing power.

## VI. THE HIGH COMMAND

SO MUCH FOR THE TERRAIN OF RELIGION'S POSTWAR CAMPAIGNING; and a dull, wearisome country it is, if the foregoing survey reflects its character. Incompletely mapped, also, which does not matter; but unnecessarily mapped, which matters a good deal. It is a waste of time to take so much of it in emphasizing the obvious. Of course this is a supernatural world; why reiterate what religion has always affirmed? That is a very natural protest from the orthodox or the uninformed, with which there can be no lack of sympathy. Unfortunately, the answer is very simple and the wearisome reiteration easily explained. For a long time a large number of the spokesmen of religion have not been affirming the supernatural.

Successive college generations have come home with their diplomas—which wisely do not certify that the possessors are educated, but only that they have been awarded degrees—saturated with a feeling, rather than convinced by thought, that the Church and its clergy are circulating counterfeit coin. These bright young alumni feel sure that the naïve acceptance of the supernatural which the devout cherish, their curious belief in prayer, their persistent assumption of divine guidance, are sentimentalisms fixed by ancient tradition in minds untouched by the realities of scientific knowledge. These religious people have made wishful thinking a philosophy of life and mistake a complex for a revelation! Such assumptions have at least mildly characterized an increasing population of blithe and self-reliant youth who have left the campus with an impregnable confidence that the

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classroom scientist from whom they "took" Physics I or Biology III, like mother, always knew best; and of nothing in the entire course was he more positive than that we are just animals like all the others "from bacilli to elephants, inhabiting for a moment the wrinkled surface of a burnt-out star." Much of this loss of religious faith is due to the silence of theology amid the vehemence of modern science.

Most of the men in pulpits have surveyed their congregations on the Sundays between semesters and have realized that, while "their" young people are home from college, not many of them are in the church. And most of these same men in the pulpits would be astonished if they knew what skepticism is looking up to them from the few students who are in the pews. If they realized this skepticism, their preaching would not deal so constantly with the small change of contemporary and passing interest and with the trite, conventional expression of religious commonplaces, marked, as a distinguished Congregational minister admonished his fellow clergymen, by frugality of thought. "If the church could but know the wilderness of unbelief in which she is campaigning, if she could but guess of the boundless antagonisms in the centers where she is set!"<sup>1</sup> This haunting word of George A. Gordon's echoes in fearfully increased volume through the present wreck of shattered cities, enslaved nations, and the thunder of the guns that struggle for the world. But the topics in Saturday's newspapers of the sermons to be preached the next day, the interests promoted in conferences, councils, bishops' meetings, institutes, and the like, for the most part indicate that the Church's spokesmen are somewhere at the rear hunting small game and target shooting while the battle rages at the front. The fundamental religious question, as Professor Whitehead wrote long since, is, What do you mean by God? And the basic source of conviction is in the world around us.

What is lacking from the world of nature with no supernatural allowed on the premises is an initiating cause, a lack

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which reaches fairly vivid prominence in the explanation of man's arrival on the scene. He is a combination of carbon, chlorine, oxygen, hydrogen, sulphur, nitrogen, in such delicate balance that a disturbance of their proportions would be disastrous. But these elements, as well as their combinations in these precise and delicate proportions, are the results of purely accidental collocations of atoms, the origin and motion of which are ultimately unexplained; while none of them or their combinations or the collocations which produced them account for the fact that they are habitations of life.

Alfred Noyes has searched the scientific records and reports his findings in a memorable passage that illuminates the demands which the denial of the supernatural makes on credulity:

At one end of the process it is supposed we have a nebula, a cloud of gas drifting about in space; and out of the action and reaction of the chemical elements in that cloud of gas, and nothing else whatsoever, the human race has slowly and surely emerged with Beethoven and Shakespeare, and the great cathedrals, and London, and New York, and all that they imply. Or you can begin at the time when this planet was absolutely lifeless. . . . You can imagine yourself coming as an immortal agnostic from another planet and sitting down alone on the shores of a lifeless sea, confident that, if you waited there in patience for a sufficient length of time, the chemical processes of that lifeless earth and sea one sure and certain day would initiate a series of events whereby the *Mauretania* would go sailing past you, and a little boy would run up to offer you the *New York Times*.<sup>2</sup>

No feebleness of imagination or lack of faith can be charged against the scientists whose interpretation of nature justifies that summary. If the original cloud of gas be granted—and there is no accounting for it—something must have started its drift; for unless some other cause has intervened, it would still be drifting. The initiating cause is absent.

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With the later stages in the process, the fitting comment appears to be Dryden's:

Great wits are sure to madness near allied,  
And thin partitions do their bounds divide.

Beethoven's piano and Shakespeare's theater, the cathedrals, the innumerable constructions, forms, activities that constitute New York and London, are the consequences of many wills directed, over many centuries, to many different ends; and before they or the countless separate elements correlated in them were produced, unnumbered plans were formulated, purposes established, and decisions made. Agelong disciplines of the mind were pursued, vast acquisitions of knowledge accumulated, and many skills developed. Before the *Mauretania* can come sailing up North River, the entire progress of invention must take place, from the floating log to the ocean liner with its Diesel engines and radio equipment, together with the long, devious histories of all invention, applied power, navigation, international freedom of travel, finance, and trade. Before there can be a *New York Times*, humanity must have moved from "Cadmus or whoever it was who invented letters" to the linotype and cablegrams in code. All of these require and evidence the operations of initiating and sustaining Will, to say nothing of comprehensive Intelligence. But nature, with the supernatural barred, initiates and develops them and the intelligence which designs and the wills which initiate them, with no intelligence or will in itself or accounting for itself. "A cell," said Herbert Spencer, "may in the course of untold millions of years, give origin to the human race." But neither Spencer nor any other of the scientific ilk has told us how that first cell arrived. And the most astonishing and critical challenge our world has had to face, as Dr. Edwin Lewis put it, "is that human intelligence has emerged as the final issue of a process which becomes less intelligent the farther back it reached,



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until eventually it is lost in a chaos where there is neither life nor feeling nor thought." <sup>3</sup>

Dr. Lewis is perhaps too positive, for there is another challenge as critical and bewildering as this. It is the contemporary argument by negation which declares that no matter how real and precious certain values may be which we have thought we experienced, what was not present at the collocation of those atoms of that original cloud of gas which launched the process that produced the world we know, is not present now and has no reality anywhere. Bertrand Russell was absurd enough in his melancholy eloquence declaring that man's "origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms" and that all are going to perish when the solar system, like Harte's John Oakhurst, hands in its checks. But he is the maddest of mad optimists beside these latest comrades of catastrophe, according to whom these hopes and fears and loves and beliefs are not going to die with the death of the solar system, because they have never even existed.

It is very confusing, even as so brilliant a mind as Bertrand Russell states it; for Webster defines a collocation as "an arrangement or ordering of objects with reference to each other," and who arranges an accidental collocation? But when one graduates from Russell into the later perspicacity of his successors, he learns that because atoms could have no apprehension of value, there is no such thing as value now. Because those atoms could not have had any realization of what we have fooled ourselves into thinking were love and faith and honor and freedom and goodness, they do not exist at all. More interesting still, because inasmuch as a collection of atoms could never have had any intelligence, neither have we or anybody else; every one of us is a riot of irrationality. Of course, the question rises that if all this is true, who had brains enough to recognize it? For the wiseacres who tell us about it must be as irrational as they say the rest of

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us are. But waiving that point, such a world would completely justify the Nazis. In such a world any race that can make itself master ought to do so, regardless of the cost. All others whose irrationality does not seek that costly expression would better trade what they have madly imagined were freedom, honor, and the hopes that make us men for board and room. The most desirable conscious existence would be life imprisonment in a penitentiary, with no decisions to make, no dreams to cherish, and for the mocking phantasms of hope the comfortable certainty of annihilation.

The sense of fantastic emptiness and idiot imagination such a reading of our world produces may well undergird a race content to wreck humanity and all its lofty, hard-won achievements of the spirit; but quite a different conviction of nature and humanity must be recovered to the postwar world if it is to remain intact—Carlyle's, for instance:

One night, late, I rode through the village where I was born. The old kirkyard tree, a huge old gnarled ash, was nestling itself softly against the great twilight in the north. A star or two looked out, and the old graves were all there, and my father and my sister, and God was above us all.

That way alone lies mental happiness, which depends upon the certainty of God. "When I knew there was a God," said famous Rabbi Duncan, "I danced upon the brig o' Dee with delight"—a performance even disillusioned, memory-haunted Renan would have appreciated, writing, as he did, that without the ancient dreams he did not see how the foundations of a happy and noble life were to be laid.

Victorious troops, that is to say, not only familiarize themselves with the terrain of operations; they draw assurance from, and adventure life on, the competence of their commanding officers. Even in strange country and while executing ominous maneuvers or engaged in costly combat action, knowing neither the objectives for which they are fighting nor the strength of the enemy, aware only of the

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casualties falling among them, they refer their fear and ignorance to the high command, in whom they have complete confidence. The devotion of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia to General Lee was as great at Petersburg and Appomattox as it had been in the triumphant days of Chancellorsville. From the beginning of the conflict to the end, his personality and presence were the one assurance by which his troops were unfailingly sustained. So too in the enemy's country, perplexed by reversals of orders and shifting directions of march, a sight of General Sherman was all that his soldiers needed to maintain their confidence and guarantee their duty, whether in conflict or advance or apparent retreat. "There goes Uncle Billy. It's all right."

Such illustrations are much too simple and personal to reflect the reality of God's relation to the world of men, but they suggest the indispensable resource and assurance which the religious conduct of life both requires and declares. It is a resource and assurance which a generation needs now to have made double sure, not alone on account of the susceptible minds that the grotesque illogic of laboratory and lecture room has acclimated to the fantastic, but because of the restless disillusionment that eludes the eye but ravages the spirit of the common life.

With the breakdown of age-old stabilities of belief there has come an ever-widening pursuit of meanings and values in living, expressed in questionings, insistencies, conflicting voices of doctrine, or prophecy, or doom, but also in a deepening realization that man must sustain alone a world that is his own creation. This pursuit, this realization, runs through contemporary fiction in those successive moods of illusion, disillusion, revulsion, reassurance that rise from the spirit and the issues of the time in a continuous process of generation, growth and dissolution.<sup>4</sup>

Fiction, over a period of years, mirrors the thought and morality of the period; and the ultimate result of this breakdown of age-old stabilities of belief, in our own generation,

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must be sheer pessimism unless its progress is checked. Mr. Will Durant might disagree, having somewhere said with an air of finality that one must have leisure to be a pessimist, and, as Mrs. Humphrey Ward feared earlier in the century, there is no leisure left in this choked life of ours. But, leisure or no leisure, pessimism, whether from events, personal experience, or the dark futility of thought, discourages from moral conflict and weakens the urge to unselfish activity. George J. Romanes, in his famous confession of agnosticism, declared that "from henceforth the precept to 'work while it is day' will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh when no man can work' "; but he recovered his religious faith too soon to demonstrate that agnosticism would not have relaxed the energies of altruism.

The fundamental and constant need of men in society is assurance that our world and life are not unguided, or at least that they may find certain guidance even through what seems to be

Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
Of endless wars.

Serious literature has never been without its witness in voices that maintain, in every generation, the reality of the disconcerting experience and its one adequate satisfaction. A century ago John Ruskin, "fresh, eloquent, and audacious," through the bewildering vehemence of his inconsistencies wrote the truth which still stands true, that "there is need, bitter need, to bring back into men's minds that to live is nothing, unless to live be to know Him by Whom we live." A more modern confirmation, from one who at the time was an unexpected witness, is Sir Philip Gibbs's declaration in 1925 that "it is because men are disloyal to their God that the world is afflicted by so much unnecessary evil, by so many tragedies and tears."<sup>5</sup> And the Quaker Thomas R. Kelly, in his *Testament of Devotion*, published in 1941,

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after his death, was speaking a word which the world planners of tomorrow and the extremely socially minded exponents of religion today must keep continually before them:

The deepest need of men is not food and clothing and shelter, important as they are. It is God. We have mistaken the nature of poverty, and thought it was economic poverty. No, it is poverty of soul. . . . Peer into poverty and see if we are really getting down to the deepest needs, in our economic salvation schemes. These are important. But they lie farther along the road, secondary steps toward world reconstruction.<sup>6</sup>

It might be a simple matter to produce evidence discrediting such testimonies as inapplicable to the contemporary mood, inasmuch as reports from all quarters indicate a rising tide of interest in religion, not only in the training camps, but throughout society at large. That, however, only suggests the danger against the postwar strategy of religion must first be directed. Religious interest, religious enthusiasm, born of a great social emergency such as the war, are very likely to recede as rapidly as they rose when the emergency has passed. Those responsible for the direction of religion after the war must first of all prevent its being stranded on the beaches of the secular life when the present flood tide has ebbed away. For the quickened religious interest of the hour arises, for the most part, from the disruption of material security, the feeling of impending danger, the fear or experience of personal sorrow, coincidences of affliction or deliverance, rather than from any enlightened sense of spiritual recreancy and need. There are a good many people, shocked and bludgeoned by the war and all that it involves, who, as Dean Inge said long since, fancy they are attracted to God when they are merely repelled by man.

For the recovery of assurance and the awakening and maintenance of the sense of need as well as of power, the generation after the war, as now, must be possessed of an in-

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telligent certainty of more than time, chance, and struggle—a much greater though less pompous certainty than the dreams of “historic mission” about which Hitler and Mussolini ranted as vapidly as Humpty Dumpty, and to a similar result. The realization of that certainty is a constant process and warrants the admonition that religion, in order to live effectively, must be recovered or reborn in every generation; and that requires that its spokesmen declare with new and confident persistence the inexorable reality of God. Declare is the word, not argue. They will not debate it; they will affirm it with the prophetic and impregnable arrogance of truth indifferent to the winds and wash of human judgment.

Few enterprises are likely to prove so futile as to offer “proofs” of the existence of God. An argument meets an impasse at the very beginning; for when one has taken his stand upon the fact that every consequence must have a cause, to say that the origin of the universe is an Uncaused Cause is a bit of intellectual acrobatics the implications of which ought not to be underestimated. There are other deterrents as well. Whether or not Newman Smyth was correct when he wrote that a God proved by us would be a God made by us, Leslie Stephens’ remark that “nobody doubted the existence of Deity until the Boyle lectures had undertaken to prove it” still leers at us across the forty intervening years. In addition, the God who can be proven, as wise and reverent minds have both proven him and found the proofs cogent, can furnish no help to men in war and in the atheism that springs from agony and evil. A syllogism offers cold comfort to men on a raft in the Pacific, and an ontological argument has nothing to say to homes whose sons are dead on African battlefields or prisoners in Japanese camps. What we have here is an intuition which millenniums of men have found capable of sustaining the demands of experience. Let the logicians do the best they can with it.

We are not badly off with an intuition instead of a proof. For the God of reason, as Paul Elmer More said, is not God

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at all. The best you can get that way will be a moral concept or a principle of concretion or perhaps a belated power not ourselves that makes for righteousness; and they are not God enough. Benjamin Franklin, at twenty-two, could begin his written schedule for the distribution of his time with his rule, "Rise, wash, and address Powerful Goodness." But when he was eighty-one and face to face with the crisis in the convention that framed the Federal Constitution, his declaration was more direct and personal, and without any reservations in the interest of science: "The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: That God governs in the affairs of men." The only God in whom the generation that now is and that which will follow the war can find confidence and enduring hope, A. J. Balfour affirmed in his Gifford Lectures delivered a few months before the outbreak of the first World War. "I mean a God," he said, "whom men can love, a God to whom men can pray, who takes sides, who has purposes and preferences, whose attributes, however conceived, leave unimpaired the possibility of a personal relation between Himself and those whom He has created." <sup>7</sup> It has been the fashion to write and to read history as a procession of natural causes, as in earlier times it was regarded as governed by chance. The one requisite for a postwar world such as the least adventurous idealists foresee is a recovery of the conviction which the Scriptures take for granted, that the ultimate forces determining human history and life are the purposes of a righteous God. To lead men to that recovery, religion must make the reality of such a God the central and constant affirmation of its evangel.

This is the one affirmation by which it can hope to recreate the loyalty to moral values which has been devastated by the war itself. Without it, so vast and malicious evil would offer no alternative to despair that ever human character would control the power that intelligence has put into human hands. With the reality of God assured, incredible as it may seem, the war is an episode, incalculable and mys-

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terious in its terror but nevertheless an episode, in the stupendous drama of life and history in which an Eternal Will is working toward the ultimate fulfillment of designs magnificent enough to justify the holocaust through which human freedom forces it to work. Nothing fundamental in Christian faith or duty or hope has been altered by the war. It has created no new moral or ethical problem with which men have to deal or to which they have to adjust their faith.

To minds concerned only with the contemporary and human, the war appears as an implacable, malignant denial of all that we have believed of God—a denial either of his power, intelligence, and goodness or else of his very existence. These millions of men killed on battlefields and in burning seas! tortured to death in captured cities and concentration camps! These millions of women and children outraged, pillaged, homeless, dying of cruelty or hardship! These open cities wantonly laid waste, with the destruction of irreplaceable treasures of wisdom and beauty won by achieving minds in the long struggle of the human spirit! This violence and lust and fury covering all continents, involving vast populations, casting the shadows of appalling misery over generations to come! The unbelievable viciousness of men, heirs of the garnered culture of millenniums, inheritors of the heroic religious tradition, who have turned from the moral splendor of their inheritance to find satisfaction in calculated and almost buoyant savagery! How can there be God in a universe in which one of the lesser worlds is the theater of so maniac and bestial a drama? Innumerable minds, some of them in pulpits, have been swept and bewildered by such questions that seem to mock the altars where once they found assurance.

But nevertheless, there is no new problem for Christian faith or theology, however severe may be the indictment of the way in which Christians have expressed their theology or faith. Moral perplexity and strain are not increased by any increase in the number of immoral events. Whatever caused



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the airplane crash in which twelve army officers and Bishop Leonard died, the fault—whether it was in the mechanism of the plane or the reactions of the pilot—was not worsened by the number of those who died. Murder is not made more criminal by multiplying the victims. The contradiction between the idea of a good God and a million men killed in battle is no sharper than the contradiction between the idea of a good God and one man killed in a street fight. The same evil elements of anger, passion, misused force, and the will to destroy are present in each case. The pillage of Holland by the Germans taking away food, furniture, clothing, silver, and live stock reflects no different moral structure and iniquity from those reflected in the burglary of a home and the theft of chickens from a hen house. The forced removal of half a million Poles from their lands and houses to far-off foreign places only carries out on the larger scale the fundamental inhumanity of dispossession seen from time to time in the eviction of a tenant family in any American town.

Men are betrayed into ungrounded pessimism by their confusion of numbers with quality. There is no greater moral harmony between God and a million good men than there is between God and a single good man—just as six pianos cannot be any more in tune than three pianos, and ten or a thousand lines cannot be any more parallel than two lines. You can account for the wickedness of the whole world when you can explain one man's ability to do wrong. And the difficulty of dealing with one man's evil-doing in relation to the character and power of God is just as great as the difficulty of dealing with the crimes of an army or an empire in relation to the character and power of God. To think that the volume of wickedness increases the moral problem is like thinking that the size of an instrument determines its musical quality—as if the bass viol were a more musical instrument than a violin, or the test of a soprano were how much she weighs. It is one man's freedom to sin, not the number of sinners which constitutes the problem of theology

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and the responsibility of God—not the quantity but the fact of sin. That is a responsibility which the Christian revelation, through the New Testament and the historic Christ and the experience of the Church, declares that God has met and continues to meet; and it is that declaration, in whatever changing forms of speech and frames of thought, which religion through its spokesmen and aesthetics must reaffirm with power.

What our age needs chiefly to know is that the most important thing of all is not anything men can do, nor the world's most grievous evil anything they can redress, but something that has already been done for them, and a wrong already righted, if only they had grace enough to *believe* it, and were humble enough to *receive* it in the obedience born of faith.<sup>8</sup>

Notwithstanding the magnitude and range of the gigantic evils of our time, the problem of evil remains unchanged; and it remains where it has always been, in the same sure, eternal hands. Religion's great word for the world after the war, as for the world now, is not the wickedness of men but the sufficiency of God.

That does not mean any relaxation of emphasis upon the responsibility of men for the salvaging and re-creation of a social order brought perilously near collapse by their own sins. Something has already been done for them and a wrong has already been righted, but the world still has to be changed. The world of justice, of opportunity, of freedom, of a rightful share in the goods of the earth for every man—the Beloved Community—is still the unceasing purpose, no matter how malevolent and hostile the present or the post-war time may be. The social goal of Christianity and the Church remains unaltered. But the conviction must be brought home to the zealots for industrial organization, political agreements, and economic revolution that, as Franklin K. Lane foresaw thirty years ago, our hope for the future is “not in a reduction in the high cost of living, nor in any

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scheme of government, but in a recognition by the people that after all there is a God in the world."

This chapter does not undertake to phrase the affirmations which religion through its spokesmen must effectively bring to the present and postwar world alike. New vocabularies will doubtless be necessary; new idioms and accents of truth will be discovered; new insights will have to be implemented in contemporary frames of social and scientific thought. But some of the fundamental convictions which must be re-established can be identified. One of them is a satisfying correlation of the power of God and the freedom of man, "so free we seem, so fettered fast we are." Samuel Johnson's "I'm free, and there's an end of it!" has always been the practical response, while philosophically freedom of the will has seemed impossible. It must be made positive and understandable if the atheism generated by the war is to be dissolved. Religion has no more fundamental or difficult responsibility than that of substantiating in the mind of the war generation that, while God does not choose evil men and evil movements, and while His righteous purpose may be delayed by them, it cannot be defeated by them. Free men can direct their aims and mobilize their energies against the ends he has designed; and a righteous God cannot in righteousness, deny them the use of their own freedom. But he can incorporate their evil aims and energies within the vast co-ordination of productive forces by which his purposes are wrought. "God has such respect for human choice," Bishop McConnell put it, "that when a man makes a bad choice God carries out the bad choice to its appropriate course in the play and interplay even of havoc-working forces." <sup>9</sup> God honors human freedom by accepting a man-made situation out of line with his purposes, and eventually works it into a new situation.

Our generation does not think as highly of John Brown of Pottawatomie and Harpers Ferry as its fathers did. It sees his unique amalgam of Elijah, Don Quixote, and Jesse

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James as violence and treason, unsoftened by the warm and prejudiced emotions of his friendly contemporaries who considered him a male Joan of Arc. But some of John Brown's insights were none the less penetrating because of the irregularities of his patriotism. "God," he used to say, "will surely attend to his own cause . . . and he will not forget the work of his own hands." In spite of the sins which condemned us to this war, the great, good ends we should have been winning, without the war, are still advancing. The world of peace, of righteousness, and of a race reorganized in freedom, security, and justice is someday to be an accomplished destiny. For God will surely attend to his own cause, not sparing men the labor, not shielding them from the consequences of their folly, not lightening the moral demands of life, not tempering the storm to those whose sins have evoked the storm, but maintaining the power of righteousness to meet the ruthlessness of evil, maintaining also the moral determinations that make us strong. The very suffering of the world bears witness to the undeflected march of the divine purpose. It vindicates the moral structure of the universe. Because of God's righteous purpose the world suffers when it sins and reaps the whirlwind where it has sown the wind. Because of God's righteous purpose its selfishness is followed by its vicious wars and wastes of human life and energy and happiness. But because, also, of God's righteous purpose "light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." God is the answer to the darkest human hours, the most desperate human needs, always coming to his victories in history and human life through the heroisms, the fidelity, the achievements of men who dare believe they are working with him.

A satisfactory doctrine of special providences must be developed in keeping with the inexorable sequences the scientists have discovered in nature and with the realisms of human experience. The English-speaking world was deeply stirred by Captain Rickenbacker's story of the survival of himself

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and his men on their rafts. His story, told with such sincerity and feeling, has had a large part in quickening what has been called the present-day return to religion. That desperate prayer and the sea gull that answered it, were they not a miracle of divine and especial providence, a modern and more dramatic version of Elijah and the ravens? No one who had gone through such an experience would doubt it. But that is too portentous a conclusion to be reached so easily. Without a far deeper scrutiny and a far more difficult adjustment of all the factors, it will leave us in a state of mind most dangerous to sound religious life and thought. When you are ready to rejoice in the revelation of God's providence to Captain Rickenbacker, the question rises like a lighting flash, What of the boy who died in that same raft? What do his parents think of the providence of God? The spokesmen of religion must disclose to a confused world the reality of a God moral, consistent, and dependable enough to take us through the contradictions of experience, satisfying all the legitimate demands of human need yet keeping intact the eternal distinctions between right and wrong.

These suggestions appear to be altogether too commonplace to be offered as a program for religion in a time and world of such huge, magnificent social enterprises as will engage the leaders of men for years to come. Surely religion can find something better, more glamorous, and more congenial to the epic age in which we are living than to be repeating old doctrines of God which every generation has taken for granted! But it is just because they have been taken for granted instead of being constantly rethought, just because the religious leadership of a generation has taken for granted that they were taken for granted and has engaged itself with current but far lesser matters, that, as A. J. Gossip said, the men of our generation have been living on rumors of the faith blown to us from their fathers' time. In his biography of Gladstone, John Morley has told of a certain Oxford scholar who always looked "as if on the point of saying something extremely piercing

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and shrewd, only it never came";<sup>10</sup> and the great moments of revelation are frequently very much like him. We expect the stupendous and we hear the commonplace. Sinai, for instance, smoked and thundered; there was thick darkness about it, and the sound of a trumpet; and the people were afraid. But when Moses came down, four fifths of what he brought with him for the inauguration of a new epoch in human life were truths they had always known: that filial respect was right; that profanity, murder, adultery, theft, falsehood, and covetousness were wrong.

The primacy of this central affirmation of religion and its duty now to revitalize it with all the resources of scholarship and spiritual insight is evident from the fact that it is the loss of acute and sensitive belief in God—however disguised or even unrecognized—which made a generation such an easy victim of the psychology that swept the colleges a few years ago and has not yet wholly passed, the psychology which explained thought, imagination, consciousness itself, as automatic response to external stimuli. It is this psychology which gave rise to the bizarre theory, popularized in fiction, that personal identity is no more than a series of sense impressions and "the passing thought the only thinker that the facts require." What has been called the unanswered riddle is where, without religion, any moral principles can be found or where, in case they are found, any authority resides that could be capable of sustaining or justifying them. And notwithstanding Aldous Huxley, religion without God is a contradiction in terms.

The negation of morals in Machiavelli, the elasticity of Nietzsche's definitions of good and evil which supports the Nazi program of the master race and its procedures, the pessimism of Hardy that finds human life without meaning, and the morally devastating instrumentalism of Dewey, could have no more welcome or effectual support than the psychology that has no need for the hypothesis of God. If the brain is an organ, not of knowledge but of behavior, and

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developed wholly as a response to environment through the evolutionary process, if thought, imagination, and consciousness are only responses to external stimuli, all human experience and activity are reduced to a common value or, more accurately, to a common lack of value; and our distinctions in value are false. In the nature of things there could be no responsibility for differences in conduct or achievement. The "Sistine Madonna" and Murillo's "Assumption of the Virgin" are no more meaningful than a child's scrawl on a scrap of paper. The Twenty-third Psalm, *Hamlet*, and the cheapest doggerel dashed off in the leisure moments of a jazz brain are equally significant and insignificant. Chopsticks, tortured from the piano by an enthusiastic five-year-old, takes its place with the "Fifth Symphony" and the "Hallelujah Chorus." The only way to keep the values which give meaning, worth, and dignity to life is to realize that whatever process of evolution has produced the brain and all that constitutes the world of nature, history, and men has been initiated and sustained by a creative, personal Will directed by intelligence to moral ends.

Recalling that a great deal of intellectual effort has been devoted to saving God, Bishop McConnell observed that the instinct has been sound because "one way to save man is to give him a worthy idea of God."<sup>11</sup> In practical life, however, the strategy of religion must recover to the postwar world more than a worthy idea of God. A worthy idea might conceivably be no more than a worthy idea; and we might be left with nothing more than the lugubrious prospect suggested by Hornell Hart, in the report of President Hoover's Research Committee on Social Trends, when he wrote that one forecast could be made with some confidence, that "if science and inductive philosophy go on developing, men will increasingly discover whether or not spiritual things are real, and will adjust their religious attitudes accordingly."<sup>12</sup> It is a melancholy forecast, for it reminds us how little science and inductive philosophy had developed in the time of Bunyan or that

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of St. Francis and how disadvantaged Jesus was! And yet they seem to have had an impregnable certainty that spiritual things are real. Science and inductive philosophy may increasingly confirm the reality of spiritual things, but this reality does not depend upon them. And religion, as it reaffirms with power the reality and character of God, in whose purposes we are all included and in whose good will we share, must again bring home to men that he is revealed with certainty and satisfaction and power only in a personal adventure of life in which one is not, like the one-hundred-proof mystic, lost in God, but becomes immediately aware of him by intuitions or experience which intelligence accepts even though it does not understand.

Only such experience of the reality of God will keep the preacher's social gospel from becoming the enthusiasm of a humanitarian for material improvement instead of the zeal of a Christian for spiritual progress. Without this central doctrine, unceasingly declared and cherished, the flame of an evangelist soon becomes the heat of a reformer emphasizing class rights and forgetting personal duties, thundering against the sins of capitalists but reminding no one of Christ.

This is the clue also to an appropriate and vital liturgy. Charles Clayton Morrison, in his Rauschenbusch lectures at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School a dozen years ago, argued against "the unintelligent imitation of ancient liturgy" and for a new liturgy embodying the social aims and activities of contemporary religion. "The subject matter of our social idealism is not religious. It is secular. But it must be made religious. And to make it religious it must be given an organic place in the liturgy of communal worship."<sup>13</sup> Nothing, however, is made religious by being printed in books or church bulletins and repeated in concert. It is made religious by relating it to a living experience of God; and the futility of much of the ritualism which has been spread through the once-evangelical churches is that the forms of religious expression have taken the place of religious experience and,



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like the Cheshire cat's grin, the ritual remains while the reality is no longer felt. Given a preaching that continually confronts the worshiping Church with the reality of God and the imperatives of life involved, ritual will not imitate an alien past and engage a congregation's voice while leaving untouched its mind and emotion. It will reinforce the desire for, or the realization of, God; or it will be superseded by a liturgy which, simple or elaborate, is the response of the living experience, not the repetition of an ancient form. "We build on that to which our insight leads; we found heart, home, state, church, our whole humanity upon the being of God."

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THE TERRAIN OF CONFLICT, THE HIGH COMMAND, AND finally the objective of the campaign! So the strategy of religion develops. But "finally" in connection with the objective of religion's campaign is a "finally" without a "finis"; it is the constant goal of the religious life beyond all its achievements in the world of time. Religion's emphasis upon the supernaturalness of the world and its persistent affirmation of a personal God will fail of their supreme and ultimate significance, if indeed they do not eventually disintegrate altogether, unless they are the foundation and buttress sustaining an invincible conviction of the eternal life.

This faces us with the most serious of the spiritual recessions of our time, which is the indifference on the part of contemporary men, both within the Church and out of it, to belief in immortality. A biographer of Thomas Carlyle, writing of the low state of religion in Scotland in the early years of the nineteenth century, said that "at funerals it seemed to fill a gap"; and for the twentieth century up to date that has appeared to be about as much as could be said for the doctrine of immortality. One cannot be dogmatic as to when or how this decline in interest in immortality began, but as likely an explanation of the beginning as can be given is to assign it to the universal recognition of evolution as descriptive of the origin of man. Other influences are not lacking. The passionate and sacrificial devotion of millions of men giving their lives for their countries in the first World War and the present conflict has brought new and very powerful reinforcement to the ancient conception of the

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persistence of racial and national identity, with corresponding lightening of emphasis upon individual survival. That French officer in the first World War, writing on the wall of the dugout where he lay dying, "I die, but France lives," unknowingly expressed a sentiment which has increasingly invaded the area of religious ideas and which scholars find supported in the early literature of the Hebrew people.

Always, also, there have been those—and many of them—so preoccupied with the interests and achievements of the life of time that the idea of a life beyond time seldom if ever impinged on their minds, and never as more than a remote and swiftly passing impression. One of James Russell Lowell's frequently quoted words is to the effect that some people have the idea of God fattened out of them; and there can be no doubt that a good many people have the idea of immortality fattened out of them by their preoccupations with prosperity in accumulation or accomplishment. The contrary experience of impoverishment and failure does not inevitably turn men's minds toward the eternal. Very frequently it issues in disbelief and resentment of such inherited religious ideas as have been kept dimly in the back of the mind, like antique furniture in an attic. Then such a one looks, as Josiah Royce said, "for his religious faith to clothe his nakedness against the tempest; and he finds perhaps some moth-eaten old garment that profits him nothing, so that his soul miserably perishes in the frost of doubt."<sup>1</sup> The idea of immortality, like that of God, has been starved out of him.

The spokesmen of religion have likewise contributed to this absorption in temporal experiences and interests resulting in indifference to the once-glowing hope of eternal life. The proclamation of the social gospel to the practical exclusion of the doctrinal and experimental content of Christian faith and life, the attitude both declared and exemplified that the business of religion is to create a perfect social order on earth, have done much to remove the idea of immortality from the category of the important, and even to make easy the assump-

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tion that, after all, it is only an idea. The engrossment of religious-minded humanitarianism in making this world perfect has taken the place of the older religious ideal of a life and social order made eternally perfect by God.

Among those whose indifference to immortality is accompanied by, or perhaps is a result of, a genuine loftiness of mind, it ranges from the "one world at a time" attitude to Matthew Arnold's "Hath no man second life?—Pitch this one high!"—which the candid testimony of human experience declares is a great deal easier to admonish than to achieve, if indeed it is not impossible. "Try as I will," said H. Wildon Carr, "to encourage myself to pursue a life of high purpose, I know in my heart that it counts for nought in the universe of life, that the greatest individual achievement is no more than the flourish of a leaf on the tree of humanity."<sup>2</sup> That is to say, with the passing of belief in immortality, value disappears from human life. History amply witnesses that belief in immortality has been the great—perhaps the greatest—"leverage of righteousness." It is the sense of eternity, as Harris E. Kirk has said, "which has thus far kept the race on the march."<sup>3</sup>

Certainly, as everyone knows whose experience has familiarized him with the behavior of ordinary people in the ills and afflictions of common life, belief in immortality is the supreme reinforcement of the human spirit, not only in the experience of dying, but in the far more devastating experience of facing the death of another, upon whom personal affection has been fixed. There follows the turbulence of bewilderment and resentment. Then the great problems of humanity and life crowd across the threshold when grief pushes open the door. Inexorable questions, often repressed but always felt through the anguish of the hour, persist in their demand for answers: questions as to the waste, the injustice, the irrationality of an order in which so much of irreplaceable value is flung away forever if it all ends in a handful of dust. Those who claim to believe in God but are

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yet indifferent to immortality, or deny it, have to face the indictment which these questions legitimately register against the character of the God in whom they claim to believe.

Religion, accordingly, has no greater or more immediate responsibility than that of recovering, not only to the postwar world but to the present world of war, a proud, incorrigible faith in personal immortality. This responsibility is made immensely more difficult and all the more acute by the holocaust of the war. For war, in a paradox as intelligible as it is real, both intensifies the desire for immortality and contributes to its disintegration. A generation that is indifferent to the value of human life cannot be keenly interested in its survival; and no consequence of war is more certain and constant than its weakening of the sense of the value of life. The slaughter of millions of men in the first World War left its mark on the generation which has followed it, in the feeble sense of horror with which the world today has faced the far greater loss of life in the present conflict. Eight or ten men plunge to their death in an air raid, and the report is that one bomber has been lost. Fifteen hundred men die in planes in an attack upon the Ruhr, and the communiqué announces that the percentage of loss registers a military profit. The world is shocked when Napoleon asks, "What are the deaths of a hundred thousand men to me?" But when Hitler says that he can send three million Germans to die in battle and asks then why he should hesitate to exterminate the Poles, no one shudders. We read with wonder, but with little awe and no revulsion, of the utter recklessness of fighting pilots jesting as they whirl into combat and taking as a matter of course that their own death is certain. The newspapers set before us constant and increasing lists of the killed in battle, and only those whose relatives are under arms read them. They do not bulk as large in conversation as quotations from the stock market or the baseball scores. When wholesale loss of life becomes a commonplace without emo-

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tion or drama, the idea of the persistence of life becomes fainter until, for many, it fades away altogether.

Meanwhile, it becomes all the more vivid to those whom war bereaves, without reinforcing the assurance and consolation which religion has always assigned to it. At the same time, the assurance which religion has always asserted, unaccompanied by specific details as to the conscious state and experience of the immortal, seems far too vague and phantasmic to satisfy the impassioned desire for substantial and particular evidence which multitudes of the bereaved demand. The result, confirmed by unfailing history, is that every great war is followed by an exaggerated practice and popularity of all forms of spiritualism, furnishing alleged communications from the other world and conversations with the dead. This is more sinister in its implications and menace today than has been generally appreciated, as evidenced by the prevalence and prosperity of soothsayers, seers, mediums, astrologers, and the entire assortment, from swamis to tea-leaf readers, professionally engaged in satisfying the astounding credulity of the superstitious in America, who, according to carefully compiled statistics, are paying eighty thousand of them about two hundred million dollars a year.

Only a minority of these eighty thousand are mediums; but all of them, regardless of their *métier*, contribute to the maintenance and increase of a persistent body of superstition with which religion has always to reckon. Nor is it sufficient to dismiss the whole matter, from tea leaves to voices of the dead, as fraudulent. A fraud that satisfies as persevering and extensive a demand as these indicate, or that fosters a sustaining hope of satisfaction, will survive all manner of invective, as it will survive criticism and logic, unless something more satisfactory is made convincing in its place. Ridicule has proved ineffective, as has the thankless task of pointing out the failures, mistakes, contradictions, and absurdities in which all of these technics of magic issue. The vast majority of incidents, foretellings, materializations, crystal gazings, and

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"communications" are intentionally perpetrated deceptions; many of the successes have altogether simple and unmagical explanations when fraud is absent; some are entirely coincidental. Nevertheless business and professional men and politicians, as well as ignorant and sentimental women and Negro heirs of ancient medicine-man traditions, furnish occupation for the eighty thousand practitioners.

Spiritualism, that is to say, is thoroughly established in the predilections of millions of people whose habits of mind are conditioned in its favor. Forty-five years ago, when the population of the United States was presumed to be seventy-five millions, Professor John Duncan Quackenbos, of Columbia University, having made a study of the subject, estimated that there were fifteen millions "tinctured with spiritistic beliefs." Whatever the number was, it is no smaller today; and the beliefs are so old that the witch of Endor was a late arrival in the procession of the necromancers. A state of mind with so long and uninterrupted a history, and in which so many participate, cannot be ignored by those who are concerned for the spiritual life and development of society. That it results in absurdities is demonstrated repeatedly, but they are absurdities which some very intelligent minds do not recognize; and though that fact itself indicates a demoralizing quality in the belief, it is not sufficient to dismiss it from serious consideration. Dr. A. Conan Doyle, for instance, was one of three members of a psychical society delegated to sit up in a haunted house. On the first night nothing occurred. On the second night there were loud noises as if someone were hammering on a table; and while the delegation could not explain the noises, it could not be certain that they were not naturally caused. But somewhat later Dr. Doyle learned that, shortly after the vigil and the noises, the bones of a child long buried had been found in the garden; and he considered the coincidence as argument for the belief that the spirit of the child had manifested itself in the noises. When the London newspapers reported the sinking of the *Lusitania*,

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with no knowledge of the loss of life a medium wrote, automatically, "It is terrible, terrible—and will have a great influence on the war." Dr. Doyle considered this a remarkable instance of supernatural communication, although it is what any intelligent woman or man would have said, and doubtless what hundreds did say, when the sinking was announced, without any supernatural powers being at all involved.

The seriousness of the responsibility of the expositors of religion in the postwar world, with its millions desolated by the conflict and groping in the dark underworld of ancient superstition, may be seen in Dr. Doyle's appraisal of Christianity and the New Testament:

When I read the New Testament with the knowledge which I have of Spiritualism, I am left with a deep conviction that the teaching of Christ was in many most important respects lost by the early Church, and has not come down to us. All these allusions to a conquest over death have, as it seems to me, little meaning in the present Christian philosophy, whereas for those who have seen, however dimly, through the veil, and touched, however slightly, the outstretched hands beyond, death has indeed been conquered. When we read so many references to the phenomena with which we are familiar, the levitations, the tongues of fire, the rushing wind, the spiritual gifts, the working of wonders, we feel that the central fact of all, the continuity of life and the communication with the dead, was most certainly known.

. . . . .  
There is the fact that Peter, James and John (who formed the psychic circle when the dead was restored to life, and were presumably the most helpful of the group) were taken. Then there is the choice of the high, pure air of the mountain, the drowsiness of the attendant mediums, the transfiguring, the shining robes, the cloud, the words: "Let us make three tabernacles," with its alternate reading: "Let us make three booths or cabinets" (the ideal way of condensing power and producing materializations)—all these make a very consistent theory of the nature of the proceedings. For the rest, the list of gifts which St. Paul



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gives as being necessary for the Christian Disciple, is simply the list of gifts of a very powerful medium, including prophecy, healing, causing miracles (or physical phenomena), clairvoyance, and other powers.<sup>4</sup>

This is New Testament interpretation which reminds one of Jefferson's remark that he had reposed his head "on that pillow of ignorance which a benevolent Creator has made so soft for us"—only this kind of ignorance can hardly be blamed upon the Creator. It is more like that of Madame Geoffrin, eminent in the literary circles of eighteenth-century Paris, whose ignorance was so impressive that she "reverenced it as the active and fruitful principle of her originality." But it is the ignorance of a very intelligent man, with the advantage of a medical education and practice, widely experienced, at home in the world of men and events, and with literary achievements, both in fiction and history, sufficient to win for him knighthood at the hand of his king. Nor is he a lonely figure in the ranks of spiritualism; many equally and more distinguished minds have marched beneath its banners.

There are, moreover, mysterious phenomena perfectly attested by unimpeachable witnesses the reality of which can neither be denied nor explained. S. Weir Mitchell, so far as he is still remembered by the general public, is recalled chiefly because of his novels *Hugh Wynne* and *Adventures of François*. But as a practicing and noted physician, he wrote also *On the Cryptogamous Origin of Malarious Fevers, Researches upon the Venom of the Rattlesnake, Lectures on Diseases of the Nervous System*, and other similar subjects, which do not easily lend themselves to the supposition that his was an erratic or unstable mind readily victimized by hallucinations. Yet Dr. Mitchell related as his own experience that he was wakened one stormy winter night in Philadelphia by the violent ringing of his doorbell, and on opening the door found on the step a little girl in a thin dress, which impressed itself on his mind. She told him that her mother

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was very sick and asked if he would not come at once. When he was ready, she indicated that he was to follow her—which he did until, a few blocks away, she led him into a house and to her mother's room but did not enter the room herself. Dr. Mitchell found the woman seriously ill of pneumonia and, when he had treated her, remarked upon her daughter who had called on him. To his astonishment the woman replied that her daughter had died a month before and that her clothes were in the near-by cupboard. In the cupboard Dr. Mitchell found the thin dress which had impressed itself on his mind, and the ragged shawl which the girl had been wearing, and said that when he touched them they were warm and could not have been out in the night.

In 1920 Sidney Dickinson published a volume entitled *True Tales of the Weird*, with a prefatory note by G. O. Babby, Assistant Secretary of the American Society for Psychical Research, and an introduction by Dr. R. H. Stetson, at the time Professor of Psychology in Oberlin College. Among other tales Mr. Dickinson told that at Capri one day he gathered some small white flowers something like our American daisies and put them into his copy of Baedeker's *Guide to Southern Italy*. Two or three days later he gathered some violets at the tomb of Cecilia Metalla at Rome and put them into his copy of Baedeker's *Guide to Central Italy*. The next day he saw at his banker's a sign to the effect that letters deposited by four o'clock that afternoon would be placed upon a specially fast ship for New York. He wrote at once to his wife, who was living in the Winthrop House, in which, just across the hall from her room, lived Celia Thaxter, a poet of considerable reputation at the time. In relating the incident he wrote that he put into his letter the flowers he had gathered and pressed in his volumes of Baedeker, writing in the letter to his wife of where he had gathered them, and posted the letter for the special ship. Before the letter had reached Mrs. Dickinson, she was strangely awakened in the night. In an adjoining bed in her

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room was her stepdaughter, her husband's child by his first wife, who had died at the child's birth seven year before. Mrs. Dickinson saw in her room, when she was wakened that night, the child's mother, serene and apparently happy, who said, "I have brought you some flowers from Sidney." Mrs. Dickinson dismissed the vision as a dream, but on waking in the morning she found a number of faded violets and small white flowers on the floor and the foot of her bed. She thought the little girl might have had them, but questioning disclosed that the little girl knew nothing of them. That same morning her husband's letter came telling her that he was enclosing the flowers, but there were no flowers enclosed. She took the flowers to a professor of botany at Harvard, who told her that the violets were of the kind that grew practically everywhere but that the small white flowers were found only in Capri.

These incidents are typical of innumerable others of like kind and are cited, not to suggest or support any theory, but simply as representative of a body of phenomena, to which those of spiritualism belong, ample enough to have engaged the serious consideration of highly trained and scientific minds. It is a body of phenomena which cannot wisely be ignored or arbitrarily dismissed and in which the clergy have taken all too little interest. For it is the basis of the very positive challenge which spiritualism presents to the Christian doctrine of immortality, a challenge which is receiving increased strength from the tragic casualties of the war. It is a challenge which comes not only on the higher levels of psychical research but, in its most inexorable and pathetic form, in the thousands of lonely men and women, immature in mentality but old in sorrow, who day after day in increasing numbers throng the séances and "churches" of spiritualism. The results continually issue in deepening morbidity and the still further disintegration of mind and moral vigor.

This chapter offers no polemic against the silliness, absurdity, or disaster which fraudulent practitioners bring upon

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the credulous. But obviously the answer to spiritualism will begin with the fact that the immortality which it has so far revealed is not worth having. The effect of spiritualism is saddening if its "revelations" are wholly false, but it is infinitely worse if they are true. Immortal spirits carrying flowers to sleeping women, finding lost articles for forgetful relatives on earth, writing verbose and ungrammatical messages about unimportant matters in the old home town, and unable to make any communication except through strangers whom they never knew in life and in many cases would not have wanted to know, particularly strangers who must be paid in cash before they mediate between earth and the invisible world, do not suggest a very satisfying immortality. The contrast between the significant and worthy occupations of some of the dead while they were still alive in the world of time and the trivial activities to which spiritualism reveals they have apparently been assigned in the other world, is depressing, to say the least. Thomson might want to sit studious "and hold high converse with the mighty Dead"; but spiritualism suggests a most disconcerting post-mortem reclassification, and the poet could rather expect to find his mighty dead terribly reduced, not only in rank, but in intelligence—the musicianship of Kreisler, when his translation is effected, eternally expended on a cornstalk fiddle; General George Washington and the Duke of Wellington doing kitchen police. Surely the still, sad music of humanity does not modulate into sheeted ghosts that squeak and gibber on the streets wherever a medium pays rent! The magnificent and solemn drama of the human spirit, its creative struggle, its heroic fortitude, its cleansing tragedy, its indomitable aspirations, do not end in mean and vulgar farce. The eschatology must be worthy the life that has achieved it. "Lofty designs must close in like effects." But the more insistent problem which the apologetic of immortality must meet is not that presented by the grotesque antics of sheets and bells and horns and tables capering like crazy Pucks in

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the darkened rooms of mediums whose absurdities clothe even their mean, pathetic cruelty with diverting ebullitions of the comic. It rises from the evolutionary development of the brain and the apparent relation of the brain to the mind, the implications of which seem to threaten individual survival. That mind and brain are intimately associated was not a bit of news brought first by the evolutionists. It was known and dealt with by science and theology before Darwin and Wallace were born, both scientist and theologian noting, though to different conclusions, that when the brain, through accident, disease, or death, ceased to function, the mind was gone. The scientist, confining his observations to perceptible phenomena and their recognizable sequences, inferred that the brain produced the mind. And the early evolutionists reached the same judgment from more ample evidence, as many of their successors do today. The older theologian, taking his stand on the inerrancy of Genesis, declared that when God breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of the man whom he had created out of clay, mind also took up its habitation in the brain prepared for it. As recently as a generation ago pulpits were vindicating religion's invincible faith by saying that the musician uses his violin, and as the destruction of the instrument does not mean the destruction of the musician or his musicianship, so the destruction of the brain leaves the mind unravaged and immortal. The analogy was eloquent, but of late it has been suspect. For the man with the brain, or perhaps the man of the brain, is the result of the evolutionary process extending over incalculable ages; and through those ages the brain was being built from a brainless beginning in a single living cell. The individual, personal man—moron or genius, Socrates or Simple Simon—traverses in his own development, from his conception to his birth, the stages of the different classes of animals below him, being successively reptile, bird, fish, vertebrate mammal, and only after these becoming man. His body, at each stage of its development, like the animals which successively he

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represented, was the result of response to realities by which it was conditioned. In this development by response his brain reached its form and function as slowly through the ages of animal evolution sensory and motor centers developed until, where in other creatures were only sensation and instinct, in the human creature there was thought. No thought, the argument runs, until there is a brain; the brain, therefore, creates the mind!

Postpone reply until another process has been taken into account: the long, laborious, but magnificent progress of the mind of man from the hour when first he broke past the brute until the present day. From a cave or a windbreak at the foot of a tree to a modern home; from a stick beaten on a hollow log to Paderewski's piano; from a few animal cries and guttural sounds to the songs of John Charles Thomas and the speeches of Churchill; from a few scratches on the wall of a cave or the bark of a tree to the frescoes of Michelangelo; from ignorance of everything except physical need and physical satisfaction, from staring frightened at the flash lightning, to the miracles of chemical and physical science—steadily the mind of man has progressed from knowledge to knowledge, from power to power; but for millenniums the brain has remained practically unchanged. Did the brain create this amazing mind; or did human personality create the brain and use it in its proud, imperious advance from Pithecanthropus and the Heidelberg man to Dante and Shakespeare, Curie and Carrel, to the men who are breaking down the atom and putting the energies of the universe into bonds? It looks as though the older pulpits were right when they said the brain was but the instrument and the mind its master. Certainly this account is mysterious and a challenge to credulity; but the alternative is that the brain creates the mind and is the author of personality, and what could be a greater mystery and challenge to credulity than that?

The achievement of every stage of physical development was by response to conditions which, by their effect upon the

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responding organism, may be called creative. And they were actual conditions. The conditions, reaction to which resulted in wings in the one class, fins in another, arms and legs in another, were real conditions. The infant mind is without an idea of number. The difference between two and ten is beyond his grasp. Responding to the creative conditions, the boy learns arithmetic, while the symbols of higher mathematics mean nothing to him. But the difference is immeasurable between the infant mind, incapable of the idea of number, and the boy, to whom the multiplication table has ceased to be a novelty and is an instrument of knowledge automatically employed. Responding to creative conditions at each higher level, the developing mind, mastering successively the more elementary mathematics—algebra, geometry, trigonometry—finds happiness and habitation in those lofty regions where number, symbol, and equation suggest the ordered beauty of the infinite. Responding to conditions, the child distinguishes the alphabet upon his building blocks, then the monosyllables on the pages of his primer; later the connected body of history, description, or romance evokes and disciplines mature capacities and taste; until finally intelligence apprehends a creative power within itself, and a Dickens, a Hugo, a Milton, makes his contribution to the world of letters.

The point is that the creative condition, the evocative end, is not a shadowy lie, "a flattering tale, delusive, vain, and hollow," but a reality rewarding the laborious and growing response with its achievement. What is to be made, then, of this conviction of immortality, which has haunted men, been passionately held by them, lured them to noble altitudes of thought and conduct, sustained their loftiest moral standards and behavior? This conviction is not a casual mood or a recent intuition; it is, as yet, inseparable from the race. The nature or quality of the immortal life has been differently conceived in the course of ages and in different stages of social development, but belief in an immortal life is the immemo-

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rial equipment of universal mankind. Perhaps Sir Oliver Lodge was overestimating the intimacy between thought and reality when he wrote that he would not "believe that it is given to man to have thoughts, nobler or loftier than the real truth of things"; but if the brain creates the mind and, accordingly, this thought of immortality corresponds to nothing in this world or another, how did man come to think it? It is an idea, a conviction, to which the whole process of nature, with the uninterrupted spectacle of destruction, disappearance, and death which it provides, gives the lie. To assert the reality of life beyond the grave is to contradict every appearance and experience this side the grave. Yet humanity in the large has maintained that assertion, supported that contradiction, since the first night fell across the human world.

Nor is this conviction of immortality an intellectual delight alone, an alluring ornament and invitation to some dim, indefinite tomorrow unrelated to a practical today.

Immortality is the leverage of righteousness, the power by which humanity is raised out of the depths of habits and vices worse than animal; it is the vast support of the spirit against the flesh, the infinite ally of love against brutality, the necessary and mighty postulate of the true life of mankind.<sup>5</sup>

The same testimony comes from another quarter as J. H. Huizinga diagnoses contemporary society and remarks that "the basis of conviction on which moral sentiments and beliefs are founded has become extremely unstable for all who do not feel themselves bound by a code of ethics revealed and incorporated in a religious faith."<sup>6</sup> It is perhaps the most eloquent of recent Gifford lecturers who adds his witness by declaring that our human ideals are so closely associated with the future that without our belief in immortality it is doubtful whether we should ever have such ideals at all. "The road which leads nowhere is difficult to make."

Certainly without the hope of an immortal life there can



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be no defending the world—with God or without—from the charge of irrationality; and in an irrational world morals would be as unreasonable as everything else. Waste, for instance! And if this war involves anything at all, it involves the most monstrous waste of human life of which mankind is guilty. But not if there is no life beyond the life of time. Without immortality, lives long or short have equal value. Where there is no permanence for which to be developed, no goal toward which the disciplines of experience direct the spirit, each life is complete at every moment. What significance is altered when a sparrow falls? Is a bubble wasted when it disappears upon the unaffected stream? The photographs published from time to time of those beaches and battlefields on which the crash of conflict has left the dead contorted as they fell; photographs of graves beneath the crosses, row on row, in Africa or islands of the Pacific or the Mediterranean; a photograph of the wreckage of a lonely plane in which a pilot died—do they not cry out beyond all silencing that the world, the universe, our thoughts of whatever God there be, are more meaningless than tales told by an idiot if all the youth and courage, the loyalties and loves and noble hopes of all these dead are forever done? An idiot would be an Aristotle compared to the irrationality that would contrive or foster or permit no saner issue of human life. There could be no crazier consummation than lifeless, void duration in which all these who loved and dreamed and dared greatly and magnificently hoped should be nothing more forever than this already disintegrating dust beneath the crosses, its only future to be blown forgotten through the empty spaces of a dead world.

The one priceless and supreme possession of a little Illinois town is a monument by Lorado Taft, a portrait quarter figure of a young woman shielding two children. It is a great artist's memorial of Annie Louise Kellar, a teacher in a one-room country schoolhouse. On an April day in 1927 she looked through a window and saw an approaching storm, and knew

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what kind of storm it was. There had been nothing in all her teacher-training courses to tell her what to do in such an emergency. One does not know precisely what her instruction had been; but it is difficult to believe that in those days of their popularity upon the platform she had not heard, at teachers' conventions, Professor Dewey implying that religion was unreal in so far as it delayed social progress by contributing to contentment, and another teacher expounding his cheerful gospel that twilight had already fallen upon Christianity and the night was just ahead; and undoubtedly she had heard the reassurances of Mr. Darrow that freedom is a myth and all our actions inexorably determined by conditions we cannot alter. But none of them had ever told her how to deal with a tornado. She knew, however, and saw to it that all the children in the room were hidden and protected underneath the desks. The door blew open, and the danger was immediately upon them. She shut it and then lay against it on the floor so that it could not again be opened. Two children left the protection of their desks and ran to her. She gathered them in her arms, shielding them with her body, and when the hurricane had passed and the frantic parents had reached the demolished schoolhouse, every child was alive, unharmed, but the teacher was dead beneath a beam from which she had been shielding those within her arms.

Is this the end of Annie Louise Kellar? "What could be less rational than that his pen and paper should be more enduring than the saint, that we should have Shakespeare's handwriting but not himself?" Had this girl's mind, so immediately responsive to the vision of duty in its most exacting form, her spirit, so radiant in unselfishness, so swift in sacrifice, suddenly become nothing, herself nothing, while the inanimate stone image that simulates to sympathetic eyes her appearance, endures through lengthening generations? The paradox is even more sinister. Lorado Taft's handicraft remains, but what of Lorado Taft? The stone endures, with its sculptured portrait, in making which the genius of a great artist was

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employed, into which a mind disciplined by years of labor, enriched by years of thought, and a spirit moved to generosity by the heroic episode, put all their skill and wisdom garnered from a studious past. But the mind that conceived and wrought the portrait has become part of the same indistinguishable annihilation into which the girl has disappeared! It is impossible so to believe. Tennyson's metaphor "Time, a maniac scattering dust" is too colorless and tame; a maniac scattering dust is too sane a figure to symbolize so mad a contradiction.

And when the dim, thin flame of the last life on earth has flickered out and hills, vales, what have been woods, rivers, brooks, and

Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—  
Are but the solemn decorations all  
Of the great tomb of man,

is eternal nothingness to be the all-inclusive, only remainder? The son of Louis XIV, who died without reaching the throne, was educated as a boy by the greatest teachers of the realm; yet, having passed his school days, it is reported that he never opened a book but found his chief interest to be that of killing weasels. This barren record has been made an illustration of what has been called the worst form of waste, the waste of possibilities of thought. But what word is monstrous enough to characterize the destruction of all thinkers, all minds which, through innumerable millenniums have achieved the knowledge, insights, powers, beauty, the loves and sympathies and aspirations that alone supply a reason for existence or give it meaning?

Without immortal life for men the universe is not only irrational; it is immoral, for without immortality the major wrongs that afflict humanity are never righted. There is a popular disposition of the future with the protective thesis that "one gets his hell in this life." But no one claims that he

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gets his heaven in this life. If pure affection, crucified in life, has ultimately no fulfillment of its thwarted happiness, the universe which evoked it is without affection; if the cry for justice from the martyred victims of societies or men too strong for them has in the end no redressing answer, the universe which implanted in them the intuition from which the cry arose is itself without justice; and the question remains forever unanswered as to how affection and the sense of justice ever came to be. The alternative to immortality is atheism.

The thought of a conscious personality, yours or mine, caught in a web of courageous follies and injustices, lured on to extinction through lying dreams and expectations, is too hideous to contemplate. Without God, and the other world, and the hope of salvation at the last, without these the universe becomes no sorry jest . . . but a purulent cancer on the corpse of nonentity.<sup>7</sup>

Nothing will do for us but an eternal life and a God whose redeeming purposes and powers no mortal mind is wise enough to limit to the world of time. We "will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High."

But thou art the same,  
And thy years shall have no end.  
The children of thy servants shall continue,  
And their seed shall be established before thee.

Here the discussion ends, apparently remote from the immediate fields of contemporary life where ignorant armies clash and a world of living men must be reordered in righteousness. Is the strategy of religion in the postwar world to be no more than a repetition of age-old beliefs, while conflicts and the way to peace, confusions and counsels of direction, wrongs and opportunities to right them, clamor around us on every side? But unless these age-old beliefs become again the vital background and sustaining forces of human conduct, our cause is already lost. Dean Inge uttered one of his greatest

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words when he said that the Church for the age is the Church of the ages. The basic truths for contemporary men are likewise the truths which men of all times have proved, by exemplifying or by denial, to be necessary to sustain moral purpose, the quest of justice, and the loftiest conceptions of human life. The supernatural world; a living God; an eternal life, in which the wrongs of time shall be redressed, its ills redeemed, and in which the aspiring minds of men find opportunity for infinite advance—these are the basic truths. Only religion is commissioned to declare them, and its declaration must be heard in all it undertakes. They will undergird its social gospel and inform and restrain its aesthetic search. Grounded in them, the individual may face the perplexities and price of duty with a confidence that "Dread can darken not, nor Death destroy." With them democracy is difficult; without them it is impossible. They are indispensable for the maintenance of the dignity of man.



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Joseph M. M. Gray, pastor of the Bexley Methodist Church, Columbus, Ohio, has had a distinguished and varied career as newspaper reporter, minister, author, and university president. His pastorates have included some of the leading churches of the East and Middle West.

A graduate of Drew Theological Seminary, Dr. Gray has received honorary degrees from Dickinson College, Baker University, and Syracuse University. He is in demand as preacher and lecturer at many colleges and state universities. From 1934 to 1940 he was Chancellor of The American University, Washington, D. C. During his term of office the faculty and student body were greatly enlarged and the School of Public Affairs was established.

The author is exceptionally well fitted to discuss religion where it touches international affairs, for his contacts have never been limited to this country. He is repeatedly a guest of The United Church of Canada, has been an exchange preacher in England, and during the first World War preached in training camps throughout England and France. Three years after Hitler came to power, Dr. Gray spent months in a series of conferences with representatives of German, Austrian, and Czechoslovakian universities exploring the changing curricula in the teaching of the social sciences.

Something of this breadth of interest is glimpsed in the author's former books: *The Old Faith in the New Day*, *The Contemporary Christ*, *An Adventure in Orthodoxy*, *Sufficient Ministers*, *Concerning the Faith*, and *Prophets of the Soul*. But *THE POSTWAR STRATEGY OF RELIGION* epitomizes the passion and clearheadedness of a farsighted and very forceful personality.

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